



# MEMOIRS

OF

## SEVERAL WESLEYAN PREACHERS,

PRINCIPALLY SELECTED FROM REV. T. JACKSON'S LIVES  
OF EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS, AND THE  
ARMINIAN AND WESLEYAN MAGAZINES.

---

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY G. LANE & P. P. SANDFORD,  
FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AT THE CONFERENCE OFFICE,  
200 MULBERRY-STREET.

---

*J. Collord, Printer.*

1843.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

THE present volume, it is confidently believed, will constitute an important addition to our means of acquainting ourselves with the early history of Methodism. Too much cannot be known of the religious experience and labours of those self-denying men, who, in the providence of God, were called to assist the Messrs. Wesley in their labours to spread Scriptural holiness over the world. American Methodists will undoubtedly appreciate the efforts of the Book Agents to give them in a permanent form what is to be known of Mr. Wesley's coadjutors. These Memoirs have been collected and arranged by the Rev. P. P. SANDFORD, whose long experience and discrimination amply qualify him to suit a work of this kind to the taste and wants of American readers. We cannot doubt but the work will be extensively circulated and read by all lovers of eminent examples of piety and zeal, and especially by Methodists.

GEORGE PECK.

*New-York, Feb. 1, 1843.*

## P R E F A C E .

---

AT an early period in the history of Methodism, Mr. Wesley, its founder under God, requested several of his preachers, "to give him in writing an account of their personal history, including a record of their conversion to God, of the circumstances under which they were led to minister the word of life, and of the principal events connected with their labours. Several of these accounts he inserted in the early volumes of the 'Arminian Magazine,' where they have been greatly admired for their simplicity, and the edifying views which they present of religion." But these interesting narratives were in the hands of very few persons, which induced Mr. T. Jackson to collect them for publication "in a separate form, with such additions as could be supplied from other documents:" connecting with them the biographies of certain Wesleyan preachers, that had been written by other hands. These were published at the conference office in London, in three duodecimo volumes.

In his preface to the work, Mr. Jackson remarks, "It is undeniable that within the last century religious knowledge has been greatly increased, and a gratifying improvement has taken place in public morals. That the Methodist ministry has been instrumental to a considerable extent in effecting this change, no candid person will deny, who is adequately informed on the subject. It must be a matter of some interest to know what kind of men Mr. Wesley associated with himself in his gigantic efforts to reform the nation, and whom Providence employed, in connection



with other agencies, in accomplishing so much spiritual and moral good. They were men of little esteem in the world; and their unpretending ministry was met with ridicule and bitter hostility; but they were sincere Christians and patriots, and rendered a valuable service to their country. They carried the truth of God into many a dark and neglected neighbourhood; and they warned, instructed, and reclaimed multitudes of ignorant and wicked people for whom no other religious teachers seemed to care.

“The present circumstances of the Methodists are very different from those in which their fathers were placed; and the universal history of the church proves that ease, with secular prosperity and honour, is more dangerous to piety than contempt and opposition. Nothing can preserve the Wesleyan body from the formality and worldliness into which many Christians in all ages have fallen, and enable them still to fulfil their high vocation, but a firm and undeviating adherence to the principles upon which Mr. Wesley and his fellow-labourers acted. No man received from Mr. Wesley an official sanction as a preacher who could not give a satisfactory account of his own conversion to the faith of Christ. He who called others to repentance, must himself have felt its sorrows. He who offered to all a free and present salvation from sin, must himself have obtained that salvation, and given proof in his own conduct that he was born from above. It was under a solemn conviction of duty, with an intense zeal for the honour of Christ, and yearning pity for the perishing souls of ungodly men, that such a man became a teacher of Christianity. When he had entered upon his work, he was to give himself wholly to it, and to be satisfied with nothing less than the turning of men from the power of Satan to God. Merely to correct the morals of his hearers was by no means the end of his

mission. It had a higher aim. He warned them that unless they became new creatures, they must perish for ever. Devoting himself to the prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures, in season and out of season he was to preach the word ; in the cottages of the poor, sometimes in the mansions of the rich, in barns, in chapels, in the open air. He was to deliver his evangelical message in conversations, and in pastoral visits from house to house, seeking in order that he might save the lost. Those that were awakened and impressed under his ministry he was to unite together in Christian fellowship, that they might strengthen each other's hands, and watch over each other in love. He was to take the oversight of the societies thus formed, and with mingled kindness and fidelity to maintain among them a holy discipline. When driven from the post of duty by violent mobs, thrown into ponds, or covered with mud and filth, he was to return undismayed to the combat, and conquer his assailants by the power of truth and love. Being reviled, he was to bless ; being persecuted, he was to suffer it ; being defamed, he was to entreat. He was not to confine his labours to large towns, or to linger in the families of the opulent, wasting his time in the pursuit of mere personal gratification ; but to penetrate into neglected villages and hamlets, distributing tracts among the people, and preaching Christ to them as a present Saviour.

“ It was thus that the Methodist societies were founded ; and it is only by the cultivation of the same spirit of holy zeal, self-denial, and enterprise, that they can be effectually preserved, and be rendered a general blessing to the world. Great is the responsibility which rests upon the Methodists of the present age. To them is committed a most sacred deposite. Their especial calling is to maintain and inculcate spiritual religion. May they be faithful to their trust ! and so shall the promise which was made

to an eminent man of old be fulfilled in their venerated founder: 'Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.'"

Many years ago, a volume of these narratives was published by the agents of the Methodist Book Concern in this country, entitled, "The Experience of several Eminent Methodist Preachers;" which volume is now on sale at 200 Mulberry-st., N. Y. But it was thought advisable to add another volume to the one in circulation, as there are abundant materials for several such volumes, in the *Arminian* and *Wesleyan Magazines*, and in the volumes of Mr. Jackson, already mentioned.

The present volume is principally selected from the above-mentioned works. All the persons whose memoirs are here recorded were European Methodist preachers; though one of them was a clergyman of the established Church; one was ordained by a Greek bishop, and was a local preacher to the end of his life; and another became a preacher after the death of Mr. Wesley: so that these Memoirs present us with a view of every variety included in this very catholic ministry.

That God may make this volume instrumental in the salvation of thousands, is the prayer with which it is ushered into the world.

P. P. SANDFORD.

*New-York, Feb. 4, 1843.*

# CONTENTS.

---

## MEMOIRS OF

	Page
Mr. Thomas Olivers .....	9
Rev. James Creighton, B. A. ....	51
Mr. Sampson Staniforth .....	72
Mr. Thomas Taylor .....	111
Mr. James Rogers .....	207
Mr. Thomas Roberts, A. M. ....	258
Mr. George Darby Dermott .....	328



# MEMOIRS

## OF

### WESLEYAN PREACHERS.

---

#### MR. THOMAS OLIVERS.

I WAS born at a village called Tregonen, in Montgomeryshire, in 1725. My father died in December, 1729. My mother was so afflicted on account of his death, that she died of a broken heart in March following; leaving me and another son, not two years old, behind her. My mother's father, Mr. Richard Humphries, took care of my brother, and when he died, left him to the care of his eldest son.

My father's uncle, a man of property, took care of me while he lived; and when he died, left me a small fortune; ordering in his will, that the interest of it should be employed in bringing me up, and that I should receive the principal when I came of age.

The person to whose care he left me was Mrs. Elizabeth Tudor, eldest daughter to his son-in-law, Mr. Thomas Tudor, an eminent farmer, in the parish of Fordon, in the same county. And as she was unmarried, she committed me to her father's care, in whose house I was boarded till I was eighteen years of age.

As soon as I was capable, I was sent to school, where I received such learning as was thought necessary. And as to religion, I was taught to say my prayers morning and evening; to repeat my catechism; to sing psalms; and to go to church, in general, twice every sabbath-day.

But my carnal mind soon discovered itself, by prompt-

ing me, not only to a great variety of childish follies, but also to a multitude of heinous sins ; particularly lying, and taking the name of God in vain. In these I was confirmed by the examples of all about me ; for, with grief I mention it, I knew not so much as a single person (except an old man or two, whom we all supposed to be crazy) who made any scruple of these or of various other acts of wickedness. There was one man in the parish who exceeded all the rest in cursing, swearing, and horrid blasphemies. This hellish art he studied with all his might. His custom was to compound twenty or thirty different expressions, to make one long and horrid oath ! I never heard of any telling him he did wrong ; but many laughed at him, and admired his cleverness ; and some even strove to imitate him. Among the rest, I was one ; and so apt a scholar was I in these diabolical practices, that, before I was fifteen years of age, I vied with my infernal instructor. It is horrid to think how often I have cursed the wind and the weather, the souls of cows and horses, yea, the very heart's blood of stones, trees, gates, and doors ! So that on this, and on various other accounts, I was generally reckoned the worst boy who had been in those parts for the last twenty or thirty years.

At eighteen years of age I was bound apprentice ; but by this time I was become so idle, that I did not half learn my business. Dancing and keeping company engrossed my whole soul ; and had it not been for some small restraints, they would have employed my whole time. Accordingly, the very first day I was at full liberty, I gave scope to my inclination to such a degree, that out of sixteen nights and days, I was fifteen of them without ever being in bed.

For four or five years I was greatly entangled with a farmer's daughter, whose sister was married to Sir I. P., of N—wt—n, in that county. What

“ Strange reverse of human fates ! ”

For one sister was wooed by, and married to, a baronet, who was esteemed one of the finest men in the country. When she died, Sir I. was almost distracted. Presently after her funeral, he published an elegy on her of a thousand verses! For her sake he said,—

“O that the fleecy care had been my lot,  
Some lonely cottage on some verdant spot!”

For some time he daily visited her in her vault, and at last took her up, and kept her in his bed-chamber for several years.

On the other hand, her sister, who was but little inferior in person, fell into the hands of a most insignificant young man, who was a means of driving her almost to an untimely end. I cannot omit giving some intimation of this particular, seeing all who are acquainted with my former life know this to be one great aggregate of my folly and wickedness; and seeing it is that which lay heaviest on my mind, both before and after my conversion; and which to this day I remember with peculiar shame and sorrow. However, God, who often brings good out of evil, made it a means (though a remote one) of my conversion.

For such was the clamour of the people, and the uneasiness of my own mind, that I determined to leave the country. Accordingly I set off for Shrewsbury. Here I continued for some time; and among various things which I have much reason to be ashamed of, I went one night to the Methodist meeting; and out of mere wantonness, made use of some very indecent language as I came out. I also went one sabbath-day to St. Chad's church, in company with a very wicked young man. We got into the organ-loft, and while the late Dr. Adams was preaching, I was wantonly cursing him and almost every sentence which proceeded out of his mouth. This was matter of huge diversion to my companion, who expressed his



heartly approbation of my profane and impious behaviour, by ridiculous laughter, and the like. O how much is it to be lamented that all this while we were called Christians, Protestants, and Churchmen !

From Shrewsbury, I went into a country village, about three miles from the town. Here I was greatly reduced in my circumstances : my conscience also stared me dreadfully in the face, as it had frequently done on many former occasions. I thought, “ I live a most wretched life. If I do not repent and forsake my sins, I shall certainly be damned : I wish I could repent of and forsake them : if I could but hate them as well as I love them, I should then be able to lay them aside ; but till then I despair of doing it. For I have always gone to church ; I have frequently prayed and resolved against my evil practices ; and yet I cannot leave them.” I then thought, “ I will receive the sacrament, and try what that will do.” Accordingly, I borrowed a “ Week’s Preparation,” and went through it regularly, reading on my knees the meditations and prayers for each day. On Sunday I went to the Lord’s table, and spent the following week in going over the second part of the book, in the same manner I had done the first. For this fortnight I kept tolerably clear of sin : but when it was over, I returned the book with many thanks, and then returned to my former practices.

From hence I went to Wrexham. I had not been here long before I was taken ill of a violent fever, of which most people expected me to die. As it was known that I had little or no money, a Methodist (Mr. John Memis, afterward Dr. Memis, of Aberdeen, who was then a journeyman to an apothecary in the town) visited me without fee or reward ; and I believe, under God, saved my life.

When I was got out of danger, I found great thankfulness to God for sparing me ; and as soon as I was able, I went to church twice every day, and read books of devo-

tion at home ; and frequently wept bitterly over what I read or heard ; for I saw very clearly, that if I had died at that time, I should certainly have gone to hell. I therefore again resolved to forsake my sins, and to become a new man.

But before I was fully recovered, my resolutions vanished away, and I returned to my former practices. Accordingly, being one day at the house of one Mr. Jones, who was then a Methodist, I swore by my Maker. Mr. Jones said, “ Young man, what a pity is it that you, who are so lately brought back from the borders of the grave, should already curse and swear ! ” I bowed, and thanked him for his seasonable reproof, and esteemed him ever after. Several times I followed him to and from church ; listening, with great attention, to what passed about religion between him and others. At last I got him by himself, and asked him many questions concerning the way to heaven. When we came near his house, I asked, “ How do you intend to spend the remainder of this sabbath ? ” He answered, “ In reading, meditation, prayer, and singing of hymns and psalms. ” When he was gone a little way from me, I turned about to look at him, and thought, “ This is an odd man indeed ! However, I wish I was like him ; but, at present, I cannot spend my sabbaths without mirth and pleasure. ” I therefore gave up my acquaintance with him, and soon became as wicked as ever.

Not long after, a young man and I, after committing a most notorious and shameful act of arch-villany, of which I was the contriver, agreed to leave the country together.

Accordingly, we set off about one in the morning ; he leaving his apprenticeship, and I several debts, behind us, which was generally my case wherever I went. About one o'clock the next day we got to Shrewsbury. While we were in a public-house, my companion began to curse

and swear at a Welsh Methodist, who sat quietly in the chimney corner. On this I cursed my companion, and said, "What is that to you, suppose he be a Methodist? The poor man is quiet, and does not affront us; therefore, you are a scoundrel for affronting him:" and so enraged was I at the ill usage this poor man received from my companion, that I was very near striking him on that account.

The next day we got to Bridgenorth, and put up at a public-house, the landlady of which was a Methodist; which we soon discovered by her conversation. We winked at each other, put on very grave looks, and asked, if there were any more Methodists in that town. She answered, "I thank God there are a few." We continued our affected gravity all that evening, and the next morning, while we were in her house. But when we were got a little way out of town, we laughed, and held our sides, and cursed and swore till we were quite weary; because she thanked God, that there were such wretches in the town.

After some days we got to Bristol. A few hours after our arrival, a sharper, pretending to pick up a sixpence, enticed us into a public-house; where, in about half an hour, he stripped us of all our money, to the last penny. However, we got into lodging that night, and the next day we got business. I had not been long in that city before I went to lodge with one who had been a Methodist; but was now, at times, a slave to drunkenness. His wife too had once been a religious woman; but was now eaten up with the cares of the world. There was also a lukewarm Moravian in the house. With these I had various disputes; particularly about election, which I could never believe. One day the Moravian and I quarrelled so highly, that he struck me; and as he was a tall, lusty man, I knew I should have no chance in fighting him.

However, for a whole hour I cursed and swore in such a manner as I never heard before or since ; and perhaps in such a manner as is seldom equalled on earth, or exceeded even in hell itself. And what was the greatest aggravation, it was all in confirmation of a lie ! For though I swore with all the rage of a fiend, and with almost all the diversified language of hell, that I would prosecute the man ; and though I wished, perhaps not less than a hundred times over, that vengeance, ruin, destruction, and damnation might lie on body and soul for ever, if I did not do it immediately ; yet I never so much as attempted to do it, from that hour to this. Indeed, such a habit of horrid swearing had I acquired, that though I saw it was dreadfully wrong, and, at times, wished and laboured to break it off ; yet, on the smallest occasion, I was carried away, as by a mighty torrent : yea, I daily and hourly did it without any provocation at all ; and frequently not knowing what I did. The poor drunken apostate was often so shocked, that one time he said, “ I wish you were out of my house ; for you are such a horrid swearer, I cannot bear you.” How astonishing is it, that a person who had ever known the fear of God, did not instantly turn such a wretch out of doors ; that the earth did not then open, and swallow him up alive ; and that an infinitely holy God did not take him at his word, and send him quick into hell, to reap that punishment he had so long deserved, yea, and so often wished for, dared, and defied !

As I was going along one night, I met a multitude of people ; and asked one of them, where they had been. She answered, “ To hear Mr. Whitefield.” She also told me, he was to preach the next night. I thought, “ I have often heard of Mr. Whitefield, and have sung songs about him : I will go and hear what he has to say.” Accordingly, I went the next evening, but was too late. The

following evening I was determined to be in time : accordingly, I went near three hours before the time. When the service began, I did little but look about me ; but on seeing the tears trickle down the cheeks of some who stood near me, I became more attentive.

The text was, “ Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ? ” When this sermon began, I was certainly a dreadful enemy to God, and to all that is good ; and one of the most profligate and abandoned young men living ; but by the time it was ended, I was become a new creature. For, in the first place, I was deeply convinced of the great goodness of God toward me all my life ; particularly, in that he had given his Son to die for me. I had also a far clearer view of all my sins ; particularly, my base ingratitude toward him. These discoveries quite broke my heart, and caused showers of tears to trickle down my cheeks. I was likewise filled with an utter abhorrence of my evil ways, and was much ashamed that ever I had walked in them. And as my heart was thus turned from all evil, so it was powerfully inclined to all that is good. It is not easy to express what strong desires I had for God and his service ; and what resolutions I had to seek and serve him in future ; in consequence of which, I broke off all my evil practices, and forsook all my wicked and foolish companions, without delay ; and gave myself up to God and his service with my whole heart. O what reason have I to say, “ Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ? ”

When I returned to my lodgings, the people saw that something remarkable had befallen me ; and, as they knew not where I had been, could not imagine what it was. They were greatly astonished the following days, on seeing me weep almost incessantly. They first judged that I had lost some near relation ; but when I told them I had not, they judged it to be some disappointment in

love. At last they found, by my great reformation, that it was a concern for religion which so deeply affected me. When they put it to me, I frankly told them the whole matter : and, though the best of them was but half-hearted in religion, yet they all rejoiced at the mighty change they saw in me.

The first Sunday after I was awakened, I went to the cathedral at six in the morning. When the *Te Deum* was read, I felt as if I had done with earth, and was praising God before his throne ! No words can set forth the joy, the rapture, the awe and reverence I felt. At eight I went to hear Mr. Whitefield : at ten I went to Christ church. When the invitation to the Lord's supper, which was to be administered the next Sunday, was read, it pierced my very heart, and caused me to weep bitterly. At the same time I determined, at all events, to partake of it. I went to church again at two in the afternoon ; at five I again heard Mr. Whitefield ; and concluded the public worship of that day at an Anabaptist meeting. Thus, though I had spent the whole Friday before in the works of the devil ; now, partly by hearing the word, and partly by reading, meditation, and abundance of private prayer, I spent the whole of this day in acts of most fervent devotion.

The next day I bought a "Week's Preparation," which, for a long time, I read on my knees, both by day and by night. This, and the Bible, were far more precious to me than rubies ; and God only knows how often I bedewed them with my tears ; especially those parts of them which speak of the love or sufferings of Christ.

As to secret prayer, I was, for some time, almost continually on my knees. By this means I soon grew lame on one knee, and went about limping : in a short time my other knee failed, so that it was with difficulty I walked at all. And so earnest was I, that I used, by the

hour together, to wrestle with all the might of my body and soul, till I almost expected to die on the spot. What with bitter cries, (unheard by any but God and myself,) together with torrents of tears, which were almost continually trickling down my cheeks, my throat was often dried up, as David says, and my eyes literally failed, while I waited for God.

As I had just before been so notoriously abandoned, none of my carnal acquaintance had much objection to my reformation ; only some of them thought I carried matters too far. One said, “ You may repent of your sins without so much weeping, and without walking the streets with your hat slouched about your ears.” The young man who came with me from Wrexham lay near my heart. Whenever he came in my way, I used to reason with him about the necessity of repentance. I would entreat him with all the love and tenderness my soul was capable of ; and while I was doing it, I sometimes seemed as if I could weep my life away over him : but, though he took it in good part, I could not prevail on him to leave his sins and to walk with me in the way to heaven.

The love I had for Mr. Whitefield was inexpressible. I used to follow him as he walked the streets, and could scarce refrain from kissing the very prints of his feet. And as to the people of God, I dearly loved to be with them, and wished to be a member of their society ; but knew not how to accomplish it : at last I ventured to mention it to one of Mr. Whitefield’s preachers, but he discouraged me ; and therefore I was obliged to give it up.

After three or four months I left Bristol, and went to Bradford in Wiltshire. As I went, I fell in company with some who were going thither, and asked if there were any Methodists in Bradford ; and on their telling me there were, I rejoiced exceedingly. When I had got to Bradford, I soon found out the place of preaching, and em-

braced the first opportunity of hearing the word ; and so constant was I therein, that for two years, I believe, I did not omit a single sermon, either late or early. I also heard with deep attention, and in general with many tears. And this I did wherever I heard the word preached, whether at church or elsewhere.

My custom was, when I went to the house of God, to fall on my knees, and with great humility and earnestness of soul to implore a blessing on what I was going to hear ; I then rose up, and fixed my eyes on the preacher, and scarce ever moved them till all was over. This occasioned a gentleman of the town, whom I reprov'd for swearing, to say, "When you come to church, you fix your eyes on the parson, and never move them till he has done."

As to the people of God in this place, I loved them as dearly as I did those I had left in Bristol ; and longed to be united with them in Christian fellowship, but knew not how. When the public preaching was over on a Sunday evening, and I, along with the multitude, was shut out from the society, I used to go into the field at the back of the preaching-house, and listen while they sung the praise of God. I would then weep bitterly at the thought, that God's people were there, praising his name together, while I, a poor and wretched fugitive, was not permitted to be among them. I would then look upon the house, and think, "Under that blessed roof the servants of God are now assembled ; but I, alas, a foolish virgin, am shut out !" and then I would weep again, as if my very heart would burst within me. When they came out, I have often followed at a small distance those of them I thought most in earnest, particularly the preacher and his company, that I might hear something further concerning the ways of God. I often followed them near two miles, and then returned praising God for this further instruction I



had picked up, as it were by stealth, and meditating thereon all the way home.

After some time, I was taken notice of by some of the principal members of the society, who desired some young men to inquire who I was. They did so; and also asked me if I desired to join the society. My heart leaped for joy on hearing that; and I told them I should be exceedingly glad to do it. They then took me to the preacher, who gave me a note of admittance, which I received with great thankfulness. As I returned home, just as I came to the bottom of the hill, at the entrance of the town, a ray of light, resembling the shining of a star, descended through a small opening in the heavens, and instantaneously shone upon me. In that instant my burden fell off, and I was so elevated, that I felt as if I could literally fly away to heaven. This was the more surprising to me, as I had always been (what I still am) so prejudiced in favour of rational religion, as not to regard visions or revelations, perhaps, so much as I ought to do. But this light was so clear, and the sweetness and other effects attending it were so great, that though it happened about twenty-seven years ago, the several circumstances thereof are as fresh on my remembrance as if they had happened but yesterday.

I now thought myself happy, as I had got among the people of God, and had received such a token of his favour. But these things were so far from making me secure or careless, that they stirred me up to greater diligence in all the works of God. For now, partly by the public preaching, partly by the various exhortations I received in the society, and partly by conversing with the people in private, I received more light, and my conscience grew more abundantly tender. Therefore, in my actions, I could not do an act of injustice, no, not to the value of a pin; or in any instance do to another what I would not he

should do unto me. In my words, I could not mention the name of God, but when it was necessary; nor even then, but with deep awe and reverence: and as to jesting and foolish talking, mentioning the faults of an absent person, talking of worldly things on the Lord's day, these I abstained from with all my might. As to my thoughts, intentions, and desires, my constant inquiry was, "Is this thought, intention, or desire, to the glory of God?" If I found it was not, I durst not indulge it. In eating and drinking, I took care to do it to the glory of God: to this end I received my daily food, nearly in the same manner as I did the body and blood of Christ. As to mental prayer, I used it daily and hourly; and for one while my rule was, to employ five minutes out of every quarter of an hour therein. I also made it matter of conscience to examine myself daily; and to humble myself before God for every thing I saw or feared had been amiss. Upon the whole, I truly lived by faith. I saw God in every thing; the heavens, the earth, and all therein, showed me something of him; yea, even from a drop of water, a blade of grass, or a grain of sand, I often received instruction.

As a member of the society I was careful not only to receive strength from them, but also to stir them up to greater diligence. Among other things, I used to run over a great part of the town to call them up to the morning preaching. If I found any of them guilty of evil-speaking, or of mentioning news or worldly business on the sabbath, or of useless conversation, I always gave them a very serious and loving reproof; at the same time advising them to be more watchful for the time to come. If I heard the people of the world swear, or take the name of God in vain, I always made it matter of conscience to reprove them lovingly and earnestly, and in the most unexceptionable language I could use.

But, notwithstanding all that God had done for me on the one hand, and all that I had done on the other, I was still liable to doubt of the favour of God. Early one morning, as I read in the “Pilgrim’s Progress” concerning the happy death of Christian, I wept bitterly, for fear my latter end would not be like his. I continued weeping for six or seven hours. At last my doubt turned into despair : I imagined that there was no mercy for me, that Christ died for all but me ! I then wept bitterly, and wished, “O that I had been any body else ! then there would have been mercy for me.” At last I began to murmur against God ; and I was tempted to speak and think blasphemously of him, and to resolve to pray no more. But going into my chamber, and seeing a New Testament lie in the window, I thought, “I will open it, and perhaps I shall see something that will do me good.” I took it up ; but instantly threw it down again, for fear of meeting with something that would aggravate rather than remove my despair. However, I at last ventured to take it up ; and on opening it, cast my eyes on those words of St. Paul : “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” This struck me exceedingly ; on which I reasoned thus : “Will God have all men to be saved ? Then I am not excluded. Did Christ give himself for all ? Then he gave himself for me. And is he to be testified in due time ? Then I believe, that in due time he will again reveal himself to me.” But what struck me most of all were those words in the following verse : “I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.” These words tore up by the roots my temptation to pray no more, to be wrathful against God, and to doubt of his mercy. I therefore fell on my knees before him, and prayed and wept in

earnest; and rose up much ashamed of my unbelief, and greatly encouraged to hope in his mercy. Some time after, when I was got again into doubts and fears, I opened my Testament on these words: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace which is to be brought in unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." I laid fast hold on those words,—“the grace which is to be brought in.” From this time I fully believed, that all the grace I wanted would be brought in unto me. It was not long after this, that I heard Mr. William Roberts preach, when he strongly exhorted us to believe, and to venture on the mercy of God. In that instant I did lay hold; I did venture to believe more fully than ever I had done before; and fear and sorrow fled away.

From my first awakening, I had a great desire to tell the world what God had done for my soul. And as I grew more experienced, this desire grew stronger and stronger. At last I thought I was called to preach: this I communicated to the young men that met in band with me. They proposed a day of solemn fasting on the occasion; which we accordingly kept. They then advised me to make a trial: I did so; and many approved of my gifts, but others thought I ought to be more established. Indeed, it was often said that I was too earnest to hold it long; and instances were produced of some who had been exceedingly earnest for a season, but afterward fell away. At the time I began to preach, my custom was, to get all my worldly business done, myself cleaned, and all my Sunday's apparel put out on Saturday night; which, sometimes, I could not accomplish before twelve o'clock. After this I frequently sat up till one or two in the morning, reading, praying, and examining myself; and have often rose at four, but never later than five o'clock, and gone two miles into the country, through all weathers, to

meet a few poor people, from six to seven. By eight I returned to hear the preaching. I have then gone seven miles, on foot, to preach at one ; then three or four miles further to preach at five ; and after all, have had five or six miles more to walk before I got home. And as in every thing I did, I put forth all my strength, I have been often so wearied, that I could scarce get over a stile ; or when I got home, go up into my chamber, to ask a blessing on the labours of the day : indeed, before I began to preach I was so earnest in all acts of public and private worship, that on a Sunday night I was commonly more wearied than on any other night in the week.

For some time after I began to preach, I had frequent doubts concerning my call. One time, as I was going to preach at Coleford, I was tempted to believe that I was running before I was sent. As I went on, the temptation grew stronger and stronger. At last I resolved to turn back. I had not gone back above thirty or forty yards, before I began to think, "This may be a temptation of the devil." On that I took out my Testament, and, on opening it, the words I cast my eyes on were, "He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven." I could not help looking on this as the voice of God to me : therefore I took courage to turn about, and pursue my journey to Coleford.

When I had been a local preacher about twelve months, the small-pox made dreadful havoc in and about Bradford. So universal was the infection, that in all that populous town, and the neighbouring villages, scarce a single person escaped who had not had it before. It was also so mortal, that six or seven were buried in a night in Bradford only. As I had never had it, it was often suggested to me to leave those parts : but I thought, "I am in the hands of a wise and gracious God ; and also in the place where his providence has fixed me ; and therefore, whether

I live or die, I will continue where I am, and commit myself to his wise disposal."

About a week after Michaelmas I was taken ill, and in the beginning was very comfortable in my soul. It was soon discovered that I should have a vast quantity, occasioned, as was supposed, by the ill-management of an ignorant old woman, who gave me heating things. I had not been ill above a day or two, before that pattern of practical Christianity, Mr. Richard Pearce, came to see me. Among other things he asked, what money I had. I said, "But little." He then encouraged me not to fear; telling me, that as I was far from my own country, he would take care I had all things necessary. Accordingly, he turned away the old woman, and sent me one of the best nurses in the town. He next sent the chief apothecary the place afforded; and lastly, Dr. Clark, the most experienced physician in all that country. But notwithstanding all these helps, I was soon one of the most deplorable objects ever seen. I was stone-blind for five weeks; my head was swelled to such an enormous size, that many thought it would drop from my shoulders; my whole body was covered with one scab, a great part of an inch thick; and though the room I lay in was large and airy, the stench was so great, that though the town was full of the small-pox, neither the doctor nor apothecary could come near me without stopping their mouths and noses as close as they were able. Many others who came to see me ran down stairs vomiting; and some declared, they never smelt a carrion in a ditch which was so offensive. Mrs. Antill, at whose house I lodged, told me and my family, a day or two ago, that though she came only occasionally into my room, yet, when she went out into the town on an errand, the smell of her clothes was so offensive, that the people could scarce bear to meet her; and that when she returned, such a stream of nox-

ious effluvia met her in the front door, that she was scarce able to enter her house. It is therefore no wonder, that all who saw or heard of me, judged that I was, by many degrees, the most afflicted of any who lived or died, either in town or country. Dr. Clark declared, "Though I have been fifty years in practice, I never saw any one so ill of this disorder before."

The first time I was got up, to have my bed made, was on New-year's day; but I was not near recovered at Lady-day. Yet all this time, though I was so extremely afflicted, I was never known to give one groan, and but once (Mrs. Antill says, not once) to say I was ill: my constant answer to all who asked me how I did, was, "I am indifferent." This made a great noise both in town and country; for the doctor, apothecary, and others, often mentioned this circumstance when others complained. Yea, Mrs. Antill told us, that long after I was recovered, and had left the country, Dr. Clark often mentioned, with astonishment, how quiet I lay, and what answers I constantly gave, though I was so dreadfully afflicted.

From this account we learn, first, that none ought to give or take any thing heating, in the beginning of this disorder. Secondly, that while there is life, none ought to despair of recovering, however ill they are. And, thirdly, that no degree of affliction is too great for the grace of God to enable us to bear with resignation, meekness, and quietness.

Before my conversion, I had contracted a great number of debts; and, by means of this illness, they were greatly multiplied. This was a cause of great uneasiness to me; and, in particular, whenever I read or heard that scripture, "Owe no man any thing," I felt as great confusion, shame, and sorrow, as if I had actually stolen every sum I owed. As soon, therefore, as I was able, I set out for my own country, to receive my fortune, which

had lain so long in Mr. Tudor's hands. As I passed through the country, I preached in most of the societies which lay in my way ; and believe it was not altogether in vain.

When I got home my old acquaintance got about me ; but when they saw such an alteration in me, they were astonished ; and the more so, as they had never seen the like before. As soon as I had received my money, I bought a horse, and rode far and near, paying all I owed in my own country. This made a great noise, and confirmed the people in their opinion, that the change they saw in me was of God. My uncle Tudor, indeed, attributed it to another cause. He said, "Thou hast been so wicked, that thou hast seen the devil ; and that has occasioned so great a change in thee." At last, my aunt Tudor and others desired me to preach the next sabbath-day ; to which I consented. On Saturday I fell in company with Lord H—re—rd, who had heard that I was turned Methodist, and was going to preach in the parish. He damned me ; and swore, if there was a pool of water near, he would throw me in. I was going to reply, but he would not suffer me. As we were going the same way, I followed at a distance ; and every now and then he turned about, swearing that he would put me in the stocks, and send me to prison. When we came near a pinfold, where there was a pair of stocks, I turned over a stile to a neighbour's house : on this, my lord swore, that if they took me in, he would drive the country of them. I therefore judged it prudent to turn another way.

The next day I went with my uncle Tudor to church and sacrament : I went with him also to evening prayers. Just as the minister was concluding, his lordship came to church. As soon as the people were got out, my lord said, "Mr. Tudor, why do you harbour that fellow about your house ?" My uncle answered, "Where should he be,



my lord, but at home?" He then desired my uncle to send me out of the parish; but my uncle said, "He is in his own parish, my lord, and about his own business." On this I stepped forward. When my lord saw me, he said, "Wh—wh—wh—wh—why dost thou dress like a parson?" (For I was dressed in blue.) I said, "What I wear, my lord, is my own, and not your lordship's." He said, "If thou dost not leave the country, I will send thee to the stocks." I answered, "I regard not the stocks, my lord: your lordship may send me to Montgomery, if you please. But before I go, I must tell your lordship, that I was shocked exceedingly yesterday, on hearing a person of your rank, who is also a magistrate, curse and swear as your lordship did, when you saw me on the common." As this conversation passed in the presence of almost the whole parish, many were well pleased to hear my lord so plainly dealt with: but my lord himself was enraged exceedingly, and called for one and another to come and take me to the stocks; but several of those he called, ran away. At last he said to his footman, "Go you, and take him away;" and then called one of his tenants, "John Parry! John Parry! I say, John Parry! come you, and take him to the stocks." I smiled, and said, "My lord, you need not call these lusty men; for if you send a child, it will do as well, seeing I shall make no resistance." When we were gone a little way, the footman swore, he had much rather carry his master to the devil than me to the stocks; and Mr. Parry swore the same. I said, "Pray do not curse and swear, or you will be as bad as my lord." But what was most remarkable, though such a multitude of young and old were present, so universally was my lord's conduct disapproved of, that none of them went with us but my aunt Tudor; nor did any one come after us but another uncle.

When we came to the stocks, my aunt said, "What do

you now intend to do?" Mr. Parry said, "We must put him in, or run the country." She said, "You and I have lived in friendship for many years, and I shall be sorry now to hurt you. Go, therefore, and ask my lord, if he will indemnify you: for if he is put in, somebody shall pay for it." Mr. Parry went, and found my lord had taken the parson and my uncle Tudor into the public house; where the parson, who had administered the sacrament that day, tarried drinking with my lord, from four in the afternoon till eleven at night; and my uncle, who had received it, till seven the next morning. This I mention as a sad specimen of the religion of my native country. When Mr. Parry came to my lord, he asked, "Have you put him in?" Mr. Parry answered, "No, my lord; for I am threatened." On this my lord jumped up, and drew his sword; and away ran the farmer, and my lord after him, both cursing and swearing like devils. When Mr. Parry returned, my aunt asked, "Well, what are you to do?" He cursed my lord, and said, "Do! we must put him in." The footman swore, "I will never put him in;" and the farmer did the same. And as I was quite passive and cheerful, my aunt said, "Thou shalt not put thyself in." I answered, "This is very hard. I am to go into the stocks; and you both swear you will not put me in; and my aunt says, I shall not put myself in. Well, then, I will tell you how it shall be: one of you shall hold up the stocks, and the other shall take hold of my leg; and by so doing, you shall both put me in. After scratching their heads, they consented: accordingly, one of them lifted up the stocks, and the other put his hand under the calf of my leg, and just put it in, and then bade me take it out again: however, we stood near the stocks the whole time, which was two hours, talking about religion. Among other things, Mr. Parry said, "It is pity you did not tell the people you would preach in the stocks." I

said, "It is very true ; and I am sorry I did not think of it."

The next morning, through my aunt's persuasion, I rode to Montgomery, to an attorney ; but he not being at home, my uncle advised me to let the matter drop ; and, indeed, I was easily persuaded to do this, as I found so little of the spirit of resentment.

A few years ago, Mrs. G——n, of Shrewsbury, told me, that Lord H. told her the affair ; and added, that if any more of them came into his parish he would serve them in the same manner. She said, "My lord, you judge of this people according to the idle reports you hear of them ; but I know them to be the servants of the living God. Therefore, my lord, beware what you do, or God will punish you one day or other." He paused awhile, and then said, "Cousin G., if I had known this before, I would not have done what I did ; but for the time to come, I will have nothing to do with them."

After I had paid every farthing I owed in my own country, I went to Shrewsbury to do the same. But many in that place had quite forgotten me, as well as what I owed them. Those I had defrauded by any unlucky trick, I told them of it, paid the full value, and offered them interest, if it was only for a few shillings. One instance of this was, a companion of mine had defrauded a Quaker of a shilling ; and because I was concerned in laying the scheme, I thought I ought to pay him. When I went to inquire for him, I found him in jail, and told him the whole affair. I then paid the shilling, and offered him interest, which he refused. He then asked me, "Who art thou ! Art thou the young man who preached in the Methodist meeting, concerning whom there is so much noise in the town ?" I said, "I am." He said, "Wilt thou come next first-day, and preach to the prisoners ?" I said, "I will." Accordingly, I went and preached in the prison chapel ;

and many were glad to hear what God had done for my soul. Indeed, I found that going to a place, and paying every one what I owed him, was frequently a means of great good ; especially, as I was always careful when people thanked me, to commend the grace of God ; telling them, “ You ought to thank God ; for if he had not converted me, I never should have thought of paying you.”

From Shrewsbury I went to Whitchurch, on purpose to pay sixpence. I then went to Wrexham, and satisfied every one there. Next I rode to Chester and Liverpool, and preached often in both places. In the first of them, several persons were turned from the evil of their way. I then went to Manchester, and from thence to Birmingham, and so on to Bristol. When I had paid all I owed in this city, I returned to Bradford. I went to Mr. Pearce immediately, and told him all I had done. I then asked him for his account ; but he bade me go and satisfy every other creditor. I did so : but when I came again, he told me he had no account against me. I saw the hand of God in this ; for I had already paid about seventy debts, which I could not accomplish till I had sold my horse, bridle, and saddle. However, I was at last clear of the world ; and, by that means, was delivered from a burden which had lain heavy upon me ever since my conversion, and which had cost me many prayers and tears.

With the small remains of my money, and with a little credit, I set up in my business. But before I was half settled in it, Mr. Wesley desired I would give it up, and go immediately into Cornwall. I was glad of the opportunity, as believing it to be the will of God concerning me. I therefore disposed of my effects, and paid the few debts I had again contracted. But I was not able to buy another horse ; and therefore, with my boots on my legs, my great coat on my back, and my saddle-bags, with my

books and linen, across my shoulder, I set out on foot, October 24th, 1753.

From Bradford I went to Coleford, and from thence to Tiverton. I had not been many weeks there before Mr. Bidgood asked me, why I had not a horse. I told him frankly the truth of the matter. He then desired me to buy one, and he would pay for him. I begged to be excused from accepting such an offer, but he still urged me. I then told him I would consult a friend: I did so, and was advised to accept the offer. A few days after, I went with a farmer into his field. In a few minutes a colt, about two years and a half old, came to me, and put his nose upon my shoulder: I stroked him, and asked the farmer what he would take for him. He said, "Five pounds." We struck a bargain at once, and in a few days I mounted my horse, and have kept him to this day, which is about twenty-five years. On him I have travelled, comfortably, not less than a hundred thousand miles in preaching the gospel. In this also I see the hand of God: for I parted with one horse, rather than bring a reproach on the gospel; and, as a reward, he provided me such another as, in many respects, none of my brethren could ever boast of.

While I laboured in Devonshire I met with some trials. As I was preaching out of doors on Christmas-day, at South Molton, a gentleman's servant rushed through the crowd, and put a letter into my hand. On opening it at my lodgings, I found a string in it; and, after the writer had fully exerted himself in pouring out a flood of low abuse, he begged that I would do him the favour to hang myself in the string he had sent me. Some years after, the gentleman at whose house I lodged told me, that this same man was killed in a fray with his master. From hence I went to North Molton; and while I was preaching in a large Baptist meeting, a fellow of an infamous

character came in, and made use of a great deal of abusive language: when I had done preaching, he and a large mob followed us through the streets, throwing whatever came first to hand. A few days after my return to Tiverton, a messenger came to let me know, that the fellow above-mentioned had got a warrant from the mayor, to make me pay for three oaths I had sworn in the pulpit. The first was, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget God." The second, "He that believeth not shall be damned." And the third, "They that have done evil shall go to the resurrection of damnation." And for these I was to pay five shillings each; for though, while I was in the pulpit, he said, I was a mere vagabond, now I was to be brought to justice, he would treat me like a gentleman.

While I was at dinner one day at Collumpton, I was dreadfully tempted to believe that I was not called to preach. I then thought, "This food does not belong to me; and therefore I am a thief and a robber in eating it." I then burst into tears, and could eat no more. As I was to preach at one o'clock, I went to the preaching-house, weeping all the way. I also went weeping into the pulpit, and wept sore while I gave out the hymn, when I was at prayer, and when I preached. The congregation was soon as deeply affected as I was myself, and many of them roared aloud for the disquietness of their souls; so that I have reason to believe, God brought much good out of that temptation.

From Devonshire I went into Cornwall, where I laboured hard: and though I cannot boast of abundant success, yet some were both convinced and converted.

As to trials, I do not remember that I had any in these parts which deserve that name. Indeed, in one place the high constable came to press me for a soldier, while I was preaching. He said, "As you preach so well. you

are very fit to serve his majesty. I therefore desire you will get ready to go with me to a magistrate to-morrow morning." I answered, "Why not to-night? I am ready to go with you now." He then said, "Well, you may first finish your sermon." Accordingly I began again where I had left off; and the constable and his companion stayed to hear me, and then went quietly away. The next morning I waited for his return; but he never came; so that in all probability what he heard was a means, at least, of cooling his courage.

From Cornwall I was sent to Norwich. While I was here I went one sabbath-day to Yarmouth. As I went along, my companion every now and then cried out, "I shall be murdered and go to hell this day; for I know not the Lord!" For the people of Yarmouth had often said, that if any Methodist came there, he should never return alive. When we got to the town, we went to the church. I then went into the market-place, and gave out a hymn. While I sung and prayed, the multitude was tolerably quiet; but as soon as I had taken my text, they began to be very rude. In a short time a friend pulled me down. After staying awhile at another friend's house, I sent for my horse: the mob followed him, and soon filled the alley where he was brought. As soon as I was mounted, he drove the mob before him; but the women stood in their doors, some with both hands full of dirt, and others with bowls of water, which they threw at me as I passed by. When we got into the open street, we had such a shower of stones, sticks, apples, turnips, potatoes, &c., as I never saw before or since. My fellow-traveller galloped out of the town as fast as he was able; but I watched the motions of the sticks and stones which were likely to hit me, so as to preserve a regular retreat. When I overtook my companion, we were thankful that we escaped

with our lives ; as were our friends in Norwich, on seeing us return.

My next remove was to London, where I continued till August. What service I was of here, I cannot tell ; only I remember, that under a sermon I preached in the Foundery, that good man, and useful preacher, Mr. Joseph Guilford, was awakened.

At our conference in 1756 I was appointed for Ireland. I spent the year in and about Limerick, Waterford, and Cork. In the first of these places, God was pleased to own my labours much. Many of the soldiers, as well as others, were converted to God.

At the next conference I was again stationed for London. In my way thither, I stopped at Whitehaven. Here I was greatly tried, from a particular quarter ; but I was more than conqueror, through Him who had loved me ; and was frequently refreshed in my soul, and, in some measure, blessed in my labours.

From Whitehaven I went to Leeds, where the people detained me about six weeks. All that time I was very much followed ; yet I cannot say, that the word was more, if so much blessed, as it had been in many other places. At last I reached London ; but my Leeds friends wrote to Mr. Wesley, to send me back. When he proposed it to me, I consented. But as I was appointed to do several things which were very disagreeable to some in power, this lost me many of my kindest friends ; and was a source of great uneasiness to me for many years.

From my first awakening, I was almost singular in my notions of marriage. I thought that young people did not consult reason, and the will of God, so much as their own foolish inclinations. When I mentioned these things to my young acquaintance, they thought my notions were romantic and chimerical. However, I determined, if ever



I married, to act according to the rules I had so often laid down for others. My first inquiry, therefore, was, "Am I called to marry at this time?" Here I weighed the reasons on both sides, and then concluded in the affirmative. I then inquired, "What sort of a person ought I to marry?" To this I answered in general, "To such a one as Christ would choose for me, suppose he were on earth, and was to undertake that business." I then asked, "But what sort of a person have I reason to believe he would choose for me?" Here I fixed on the following properties, and ranged them in the following order; placing that first which I judged to be of most value in the sight of God; and that last which I thought of smallest importance. The first was grace. I was quite certain, that no preacher of God's word ought, on any consideration, to marry one who is not eminently gracious. The second, that she ought to have tolerably good common sense. A Methodist preacher in particular, who travels into all parts, and sees such a variety of company, I believed, ought not to take a fool with him. Thirdly, as I knew the natural warmth of my own temper, I concluded that a wise and gracious God would not choose a companion for me who would throw oil, but rather water, upon the fire. Fourthly, I judged that, as I was connected with a poor people, the will of God was, that whoever I married should have a small competency, to prevent my making the gospel chargeable to any.

Having proceeded thus far, my next inquiry was, "But who is the person in whom these properties are thus found in the most eminent degree?" I immediately turned my eyes to Miss Green, a person of a good family, and noted through all the north of England for her extraordinary piety. I therefore opened my mind to her; and, after consulting Mr. Wesley, we were married. As in this affair I consulted reason and the will of God so impar-

tially, I have had abundant reason to be thankful ever since.

As soon as I was married, I went into Lancashire, where I laboured about a year. The greatest outward trial I had here was the decay of my health. Sometimes I was so ill, that when I left one place to go to another, the people took a final farewell of me, as not expecting me to live to come round again at the end of three weeks or a month. However, I kept my circuit in general, which included a great part of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire; and daily did therein the whole work of a healthy man. But though I have not much to say concerning my usefulness this year, yet some were awakened and brought to God, who stand to this day.

From hence I went into the York circuit, in 1760. At that time I was thought to be near the last stage of a consumption. And, as I had about three hundred miles to ride every six weeks, and about sixty societies to take care of, few thought I should be able to go once round. But I said, "I am determined to go as far as I can; and when I can go no further, I will turn back." Accordingly, I entered upon my work, which was enough to try the strongest constitution. By the time I had got about half way round, I found that violent labour got me a little appetite, yea, and caused me to sleep better; so that I began to gather flesh before I got to the end of my circuit. But my recovery was exceedingly gradual; for as I had been declining from the time I had the small-pox, which was about eight years; so I was about twelve more, before I was quite recovered.

My next remove was to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Here I had many mercies and comforts, and a few trials. In one place I was obliged to put thirty-five members out of the society; and if I had not laboured hard, and exercised great patience, we should have lost about two hundred in

that one place. But though I had the express order of Mr. Wesley for what I did, and acted with great integrity on the one hand, and tenderness on the other, I lost many of my dearest friends, who from that time became my bitterest enemies. But I must say (in honour of the grace of God) that friends and enemies have always been alike to me, when I thought the glory of God was concerned.

From Newcastle I went home to Leeds, where I laboured a whole year. But as several persons still retained their old prejudices against me, my labour here was now rather uncomfortable. However, though I cannot say I was of any great service this year, yet I had some fruit in several places.

The year following I was stationed in Bristol. I believe I was never so likely to do good as at this time; but I was removed, and spent the remainder of the year in Leeds. In 1760 I buried my first child here; and this year I buried the other. The next year I spent in London and Colchester. In the last of these places we enjoyed great poverty and great peace, and had many comfortable opportunities of waiting on God, both in public and private. In London I had friends and enemies, comforts and trials; but the greatest trial of all was, the hardness of my deceitful heart, which I sometimes felt in an eminent degree.

At the Manchester conference I was appointed for Scotland. The two years I tarried here I spent in and about Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee. While I was in Edinburgh, I was remarkably earnest in private prayer one night. The next morning I awoke about four o'clock, and said to myself, "I will lie here no longer, but rise and call upon God." In an instant I was filled with such sweetness, as I had not tasted for a long time. I hastened to put on my clothes, and fell on my knees before God; and, with tears of gratitude, thanked him with my whole

heart. The effect of this visitation lasted a considerable time, and was of great use to me, both in preaching and living. Some time after, as I was preaching on the barren fig-tree, a few words proceeded from me in such a manner as I can scarcely describe. The congregation seemed as if they had been electrified. One who had long been bowed down cried out again; and said afterward, that under those words she felt as if she was just dropping into hell! I have since thought that if the word was always attended with such power, very few would stand before it. While I was in this circuit, I spent two or three nights in Glasgow; and one person, at least, was converted to God in that time. As to Aberdeen, I can only say, my labours were often comfortable to myself. What use they were of to others will be fully known in due time.

While I was here, I found out that Dr. Memis was the person who, under God, saved my life many years ago, when I was ill at Wrexham. When I first went to his house, we remembered nothing of each other. However, in conversing about our travels, and on comparing circumstances together, I found that he was the person to whom I owed so much. On this discovery, I felt great love to my old benefactor; but the doctor himself was not able to recollect any thing of the affair. O, how many right actions which God's people have wrought are now forgotten of them, which, nevertheless, are noted in his book, and shall be brought to light in that day when he "shall reward every man according to his works!"

In Dundee I laboured comfortably, among a poor, quiet, earnest, and happy people. Here I fell into intimate acquaintance with Mr. T., minister of one of the churches in that town. Our friendly interviews, our Christian conversations, our free and candid debates, together with the kind treatment I almost daily received at his house, I

shall always remember with pleasure and gratitude. Nor shall I ever forget the last sermon I preached in that town: such liberty I never felt before or since. I had such an absolute command of my ideas, language, voice, and gesture, that I could say what I would, and also in what manner I pleased! What good, if any, was then done, I know not now, but shall know another day.

From Scotland I went over to Dublin. Here the Lord began to bless my labours almost as soon as I arrived. In a very few weeks a considerable number were awakened, and others received a sense of the favour of God. But my fellow-labourer and I were grieved to see so much levity among many of our friends, and determined to oppose it. Accordingly, we preached against it with all our might. We determined also to show, by our example, how Christians ought to be serious, and to take up their cross daily. But J. M. opposed us, by softening the awful truths we delivered: this was very agreeable to the delicate part of our hearers. At last I spoke my mind very freely: the consequence was, he and his friends rose up against me, and quite bore me down.

The next year I came over to Chester, where I was stationed for a year. From hence I went to pay a visit to my own country; and preached in Montgomery, Newtown, Llanidloes, and many other places. In Tregonan, where I was born, I preached once, and had most of the village to hear me. But when Mr. B—n—y, who owned most of the parish, heard of it, he told my uncle, who with my grandfather had lived in that house nearly a hundred years, that if he encouraged me to preach in the village, he would turn him out immediately: he also sent a servant to a cousin of mine, who lived in another parish, and told her the same.

When I came to Fordon, the place where I was brought up, I fell in company with the minister, who took me to

his house. He said, "I hear you intend to preach in this parish." I told him, "I do; yea, and think it my duty so to do." He then intimated, that I should be punished if I did. I said, "I am licensed, and therefore will not be hindered by any man in the parish; no, nor by the primate of all England." He then spoke of the divine right, which was found only in the established clergy of this land. I answered, "The world, sir, is large, of which England is but a very small part,—an island only, stuck up, as it were, in one corner of it! And as to its established clergy, you know, sir, that many of them are worldly-minded to a proverb; yea, that multitudes of them are drunkards, swearers, pleasure-takers, &c.: and yet you tell me, that such a clergy, of so inconsiderable a corner of the world, are the only ministers of God; and that all others are intruders and deceivers." To this he made no answer: so we parted as we met. In a few days I preached in the house of one of Mr. Tudor's daughters; and, I believe, to the satisfaction of most who heard me.

Soon after I returned to Chester my wife was taken ill of a fever. For eight weeks the physician told me every day, that there was no hope of her recovery; and she thought herself, for many weeks, that every day would be her last. But this was so far from being matter of sorrow to her, that she rejoiced at the prospect of being so soon at her Father's house; and told me frequently, that she had much rather die than live: and though, from beginning to end, she was ill fifteen weeks, in all that time I never heard her once complain about the state of her soul. By this sickness I was more clearly convinced of the necessity, not only of faith, but also of a good conscience. Faith, I saw, as a hand, lays hold on Christ; and a good conscience confirms that hold. Hence my wife, who had for so many years kept a conscience void of offence

toward God and toward man, now lay as on the brink of eternity, quiet and unmoved, like a ship at anchor in the mouth of a harbour, without one blast of wind to disturb her peace. On the other hand, I saw that an evil conscience causes faith first to weaken its grasp, and then to unloose its hold. Thus it is, that in an hour of trial so many make shipwreck of faith, and are filled with doubt and fear ; because, by their loose walking, they have put away a good conscience.

The next year I went to Liverpool. Here I enjoyed many mercies and comforts ; but I cannot say much of my usefulness. Indeed, one evening, just as I was going into the pulpit at a village about eight miles out of Liverpool, I was seized with a great spitting of blood. However, as I did not know where it might end, I was determined, if possible, to say something for God once more. Accordingly, I began, and delivered a few sentences, and then spit out a large quantity of blood ; and so I went on for about half an hour. I then, in the best manner I could, commended myself and the people unto God. And as I did not judge it safe to stay that night in a village where help could not be had in case of extreme necessity, I took my horse, and returned to Liverpool. Shortly after I heard that one of the most abandoned and noted sinners in those parts was awakened that night. This made a great noise far and near, and was a means of stopping the mouths of many gainsayers, and, perhaps, of saving some souls from death. On receiving this account, all within me cried out,—

“ My-life, my blood, I here present,  
If for thy cause they may be spent ;  
Fulfil thy sovereign pleasure, Lord !  
Thy will be done, thy name adored.”

From Liverpool I went to the London conference, and was appointed for the Derby circuit. But, before I left

London, I fell into great dejection of spirit, and was for many weeks on the brink of despair. But I cried unto God night and day; and, in due time, he showed me the light of his countenance once more: for which I hope to praise him to all eternity. I have also great occasion to be thankful to his people, who sympathized with me, and encouraged me on every side. When my soul was again revived, I went into my circuit, and was kindly received. Here I continued for two years, among a loving, happy people; and I have some reason to believe that my labours here were not altogether in vain. From hence I came once more to London, where I continued two years. In the first of these, Mr. Toplady paid me a visit at the Foundry, and stayed about three hours. We soon entered on a debate about our different sentiments; which we carried on, from first to last, without one unkind or uncivil expression. I mentioned several reasons why I could not be a predestinarian; and as I am still of the same mind, I shall here repeat the substance of them, as some of my present objections to that hypothesis.

The first principle of predestination, I said, is, that "God's sovereignty is, in every sense, absolute and unlimited." Now, I undertake to demonstrate that, in some sense, it is not so. For instance: it is certain that though it is not limited by any thing without him, his other attributes, such as his wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and love, limit it on every side. Hence it is, that though he is a Sovereign, yet it is impossible that he should be either an unwise, unholy, unjust, untrue, or an unloving Sovereign; which would absolutely be the case, if, by his mere sovereignty, he had decreed sin, reprobation, &c.

The next fundamental of predestination is, that "God, as a mere and an unlimited Sovereign, has decreed whatsoever comes to pass." Now, as idolatry, blasphemy, sabbath-breaking, murder, adultery, &c., come to pass,



according to this principle of predestination, God has decreed them. And as it is certain, that all these are forbidden in his word, it follows, according to this hypothesis, that he has absolutely decreed and expressly forbidden the same things. Now, before I can receive the hypothesis which supposes this, I must clearly see how it is consistent with the wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and love of God to do this.

Thirdly, because the absolute sovereignty of God has thus decreed every thing, predestination represents mankind as not having any of their actions or volitions in their own power, but as being acted upon like mere machines. But God, by giving them instructions, commands, promises, and threatenings, treats them as if they were free and voluntary agents. Now, before I can be a predestinarian, I must see how it agrees with the aforesaid attributes of God, for his sovereignty to decree, that men should be created involuntary beings, and then to deal with them as if they were free.

As Mr. Toplady did not offer any solid answer to these reasonings, I told him, that, as an honest man, I could not be of his opinion till these difficulties were fully removed. We then parted, as good friends at least as we met; and I was told after, that he spoke well of me in several places; but, in his next publication, I was almost all that is bad!

The next year I went with Mr. Wesley to visit my friends in Wiltshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall. This was a very agreeable journey; and I hope it was a profitable one to my old acquaintance, whom I had not seen for many years. After this I spent a year in visiting my friends in various parts of the kingdom; and, I believe, this labour of love was not in vain. The conference following, I undertook the care of Mr. Wesley's printing. From that time I have been in London; and between

preaching, and writing, and the care of the press, I never laboured harder in all my life. But I find labour good both for body and soul ; and therefore I hope to be fully employed as long as I live.

Upon the whole, when I consider how the providence of God provided for me in my infancy, brought me up to the state of man, preserved me from those evils which brought others to an untimely end, directed my wandering steps to the means of my conversion, cast my lot among his people, called me to preach his word, owned my preaching to the conversion of others, stood by me in many trials, brought me back so often from the brink of the grave, healed my manifold backslidings, provided me a suitable companion, and put me in possession of all the necessities of life ; when I consider these things, I must say, “ Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life ; and I hope to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.”

---

For several years Mr. Olivers sustained what he denominates “ the care of Mr. Wesley’s printing.” Mr. Wesley himself selected the matter for “ The Arminian Magazine,” and committed it to Mr. Olivers for publication. In this office he did not appear to advantage ; and indeed he entered upon it too late in life to afford reasonable hope of success. Having been long accustomed to read merely for the purpose of catching the sense of the authors whom he deemed it requisite to consult, it could hardly be expected he would readily acquire the habit of that minute attention, not only to words, but also to letters and points, which is necessary to ensure typographical accuracy. The mistakes which appeared in the successive numbers of his Magazine were, to the correct mind of Mr. Wesley,

a perpetual source of vexation. In many instances, they presented a complete perversion of the sense, even when subjects of importance were under discussion. He himself prepared, for several of the volumes, a frightful list of errata, which he published for the benefit of the subscribers. Mr. Olivers also occasionally inserted articles on his own responsibility, of which Mr. Wesley did not approve. It is not therefore surprising that the following entry appears in Mr. Wesley's Journal, under the date of August 9th, 1789:—"I settled all my temporal business, and, in particular, chose a new person to prepare the Arminian Magazine; being obliged, however unwillingly, to drop Mr. O——, for only these two reasons: 1. The errata are insufferable. I have borne them for these twelve years, but can bear them no longer. 2. Several pieces are inserted without my knowledge, both in prose and verse. I must try whether these things cannot be amended for the short residue of my life."

Mr. Olivers continued his residence in London, where he exercised his ministry as the infirmities of age permitted, till March, 1799, when he died somewhat suddenly, and his remains were deposited in Mr. Wesley's tomb, behind the City-road chapel.

Mr. Olivers was a man of very strong mind, and of varied talents. As a preacher, he was argumentative, energetic, zealous, and successful, especially during the period of his itinerancy. He had thoroughly studied the Calvinistic controversy, and wrote several tracts upon that subject, which display superior force of argument, and logical skill. He defended his own creed, and the character of Mr. Wesley, with power and success against the rude and abusive assaults of Mr. Toplady, and of Messrs. Richard and Rowland Hill, by both of whom he was treated with unchristian contumely. His prose compositions possess great merit. They are simple, perspicuous,

energetic, and generally correct. Nor did he less excel in sacred verse. His fine hymn to the God of Abraham, adapted to a celebrated air sung by Leoni in the Jews' synagogue, had reached the thirtieth edition in the year 1779. He also wrote a hymn on the last judgment, consisting of several stanzas, which he set to music himself, and the twentieth edition of which was published at the period just mentioned. His "Hymn of Praise to Christ" was set to music by a gentleman in Ireland, and performed before the bishop of Waterford in his cathedral on Christmas-day. To this was annexed a hymn on Matthew v, 29, 30. It should also be stated that the hymn beginning,

"Lo! he comes with clouds descending,"

with the fine tune to which it is set in Mr. Wesley's "Sacred Harmony," were both composed by Mr. Olivers. As a writer of hymns he was no imitator. His strains of thought, and his versification, are equally original.

Mr. Olivers' talents secured for him a high degree of respect. Mr. Wesley pronounced him to be a "full match" for the Rev. Augustus Toplady; and when Sir Richard Hill spoke of him in language of contempt, as "one Thomas Oliver, alias Olivers," Mr. Fletcher said, "This author was, twenty-five years ago, a mechanic, and, like 'one' Peter, 'alias' Simon, a fisherman, and like 'one' Saul, 'alias' Paul, a tent-maker, has had the honour of being promoted to the dignity of a preacher of the gospel; and his talents as a writer, a logician, a poet, and a composer of sacred music, are known to those who have looked into his publications." The conference also state, that "in his younger days he was a zealous, able, and useful travelling preacher. His talents were very considerable; and his attachment to Mr. Wesley, and the cause of Methodism, was fully evidenced by several masterly publications."

Mr. Olivers appears to have been distinguished by great

firmness and resolution. When Mr. Shirley and some other Calvinist ministers came to the conference of 1772, which was held in Bristol, for the purpose of obtaining some modification of the Minutes of the preceding year, and Mr. Wesley, with his preachers in general, agreed to sign a paper which was presented to them for that purpose, Mr. Olivers declared his dissent from the whole affair, and warned his friends that an ill use would be made of their unsuspecting candour. His remonstrances were disregarded at the time; but his friends afterward found that his apprehensions were unhappily well founded. The following introductory paragraphs to his "Scourge to Calumny, inscribed to Richard Hill, Esq.," will show his manner of writing, and the kind of treatment which he met with:—

"Honoured sir, on Monday, Feb. 15th, I attended the evening prayers at St. Paul's. The psalm for the day was the seventy-eighth. The sublime description of God's power and glory there given, as displayed in behalf of his people through all generations, greatly affected me. I was also much affected at the account the royal penman gave of himself. 'He chose David also his servant,' said he, 'and took him away from the sheepfolds. As he was following the ewes great with young, he took him that he might feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.'

"In this account I scarcely knew which to admire most, the providence of God in raising a shepherd's boy to the dignity of so great a monarch; or the piety of this renowned people in not rejecting and despising him, or his own amazing humility, at a time when he had reached the very summit of worldly glory, in transmitting to future ages such an explicit account of his mean original. On these reflections, all within me cried out, 'Lord, shall I, shall any servant of thine, after this, be ashamed of an

humble birth, or of a mean employment? Forbid it, gracious God!

“As I returned home, I called at Mr. Dilly’s for your ‘Farrago Double-distilled;’ and on reading therein the contempt cast on my insignificant name, I adored the kind Providence which brought me so seasonably under the sound of such a Scripture, and which impressed it so deeply on my heart.

“But permit me to ask, sir, by what laws you are authorized to insult a person who never injured you? Not by the laws of God; not by the precepts of Christianity. For these teach you, not to ‘render evil for evil, or railing for railing.’ But your conduct, sir, has been the reverse of this; for you have rendered evil to one of whom you cannot say that he has injured you so much as in thought. You have railed on him while he was ‘dumb and opened not his mouth.’ You know, sir, who hath said, ‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.’ Now, have you done this in the present case? Consider, honoured sir, have you, in mentioning my name, been as careful not to load it with public contempt, as you would that I should be in mentioning yours?

“Perhaps you will wonder that I animadvert so freely on the conduct of a person of your consequence, in making any use of my name which you think proper. But permit me to tell you, sir, that my name is as sacred to me, as yours is to you. And permit me to tell you further, that if the inequality which subsists between us was a thousand times greater than it is, you would have no more right to insult me, than I should have to insult you. And permit me to tell you once more, that if you were the greatest peer of the realm, and I the poorest peasant, the laws of God and of my country would authorize me to call you to an account, for every insult offered to my character, either as a fellow-creature or as an Englishman.

“As to that reputation which arises from an honourable birth, an early education, a plentiful fortune, and a respectable employment, you are rich : you have flocks and herds in great abundance. But as for me, if I possess one scrap of credit in the world, it is only as a single lamb, bought with my own industry, nursed at my own expense, and with much toil and patience ; and which, after all, is so small and feeble, that it can scarce be seen or heard among all the mighty flocks which adorn your ample plains.

“Now, sir, what was the reason that you, a man of such abundance, should endeavour to rob me of my little all ?”

Mr. Olivers' affection for his father and friend, Mr. Wesley, was strong and uninterrupted. He not only defended the character of that eminent man against the slanderous attacks of the Messrs. Hill and Toplady, but also against those of the Rev. Caleb Evans ; and when Mr. Wesley died, he poured out the sorrows of his heart in an elegy of considerable length, and of great pathos.

REV. JAMES CREIGHTON, B. A.

---

THE following account was written about a year ago, when I was in a bad state of health; and was intended only for the use of my own family, when it should please God to remove me from them. But I had no intention that it should be made public; because I know, however interesting many little circumstances of our lives may be to those who are nearly connected with us; yet they prove insipid to others, unless they are attended with something remarkable. But, it being observed by a judicious person, that we ought publicly to acknowledge the loving kindness of the Lord, even in *little* circumstances, I have consented that the following short account should be made public.

I was born at a place called Moyne-Hall, near Cavan, the chief town of the county of that name, in Ireland, in the year 1739. My ancestors, both by my father's and mother's side, were of Scotch descent, and settled in Ireland, I believe, in the latter end of the last, or the beginning of the present century. They were dissenters from the Church of England; but my father having seldom an opportunity of going to the dissenting meeting (as there was none near him) generally attended the Church with his family.

My mother endeavoured early to impress my mind with the principles of the Christian religion, and urged me much to the reading of the Scriptures. Pity but all parents would "train up their children in the way they should go;" and particularly make them acquainted with the oracles of God; for though they often turn aside from them, yet



the Scripture truths, which have been warmly urged upon the mind, will generally recur sooner or later, especially in the hour of sickness or affliction ; and may be a means of bringing them acquainted with their own hearts, and with Jesus Christ and him crucified.

While very young I was sent to school, where I excelled most in such things as were taught there. When I was pretty well fitted for business, and was about to quit the English school, a clergyman, who was master of a Grammar school in Cavan, hearing a favourable account of me from my old schoolmaster, requested my father, that I might be sent to him, in order to be taught the languages. My father having consented, I went to him, where I made a considerable progress. In a year after my going to this school I was put to learn Greek ; and in four years and a half from my entering it I was admitted into Trinity College, Dublin. Here I did not make any extraordinary progress, though I was far from being idle ; and having naturally a bad utterance, I could not express myself so readily or clearly as others, though I understood things as well as they did. Indeed, I thought sometimes I was not fairly dealt with, in respect to premiums which are given in that college. However, I got through my under-graduate course with decency, and at Shrove-Tide commencement, in the year 1764, was admitted to the degree of bachelor of arts.

After leaving the college, I was an assistant, for two years, at the school where I had been bred. I was much inclined to have remained in a private station, conscious that I was not calculated to appear in public. Yet during my stay in the college, and also for near a year after I left it, I often reasoned concerning entering into orders, and could not reconcile myself to it. The chief difficulty lay here ; I was conscious that I was unqualified for so important a work ; neither was I clearly satisfied that I

was called of God. I often prayed earnestly that God would give me light, or some token whether it was his will or not. But I received nothing that I could look upon as an answer till a little before I went into orders. In the beginning of October, in the year 1764, the gentleman in whose school I assisted, came and informed me that the bishop was shortly to hold an ordination, and that I must go to him in a few days to be examined for orders. This news threw me into great distress of mind; and I told him I could not think of it, as I had told him before that I looked upon myself as scarcely fit for any business in life.

I then applied myself to fervent prayer; in consequence of which, being a little more satisfied, I was on the 28th of October admitted to the order of deacon, and to that of priesthood on the same day of October in the following year, in the cathedral church of Kilmore, by the then bishop of that see.

But though admitted into this sacred office, yet was I totally unfit to teach *others* the way of salvation; not having learned, what should be the first lesson with every man, but especially every preacher, viz., to *know myself*. I often formed good resolutions, especially on my taking priest's orders: but alas! I kept them not. And no wonder, for I was still a *natural man*, and consequently could not discern spiritual things. I had not power to keep that law which I delivered to others. I found by experience the truth of what St. Paul said, when personating a natural man, "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." I had, it is true, been by preventing grace kept from many outward evils, to which youth is generally prone; so that, when in the college, I was looked upon as somewhat singular. I generally attended the public means of grace in the college, and sometimes prayed earnestly in secret. I struggled fre-

quently against sin, especially those which most easily beset me ; but this was commonly of short duration. As I advanced in years, and got acquainted with the world, I conformed more and more to it, than in my youth : being of too easy a temper, I was too often persuaded to do things contrary to my conscience ; particularly to drink more than I could well bear, (though I was seldom what the world calls drunk,) and to partake of foolish amusements.

From my earliest days, as God had been frequently convincing me of the sinfulness of my heart and life, I was fond of reading, and of singing the penitential psalms ; and was often constrained to shed tears when repeating them in private. After many efforts, I almost fell into despair of ever gaining the victory ; and indeed the last spark of preventing grace seemed to be almost extinguished, when God, who is rich in mercy, and willing that “all should come to the knowledge of his truth,” was pleased, in the latter end of the year 1776, fully to open my eyes.

I was not at this time acquainted with the writings of the people called Methodists ; nor did I choose to read them, except just glancing my eye over some few that fell in my way. Because I heard they spoke much of *faith*, I thought they held Antinomian principles ; but when I came to inquire candidly into the matter, I found it was quite the reverse ; and that no people insist on holiness as consequent on faith, and a life devoted to God, more than they do. In my youth I had heard some of them preach at a friend's house. I had no particular aversion to them, but was indifferent about them. After my entering into orders, my aversion to them increased ; which was partly occasioned by an advice given me by my bishop, who was a great enemy to them : for, on my commencing curate immediately under him in the cathedral, he gave me this caution : “Say nothing at all

about *faith* in your sermons." This, coming from one whom I looked upon as a father in the church, had great weight with *me*. So that after this I was rather an opposer, though not a persecutor, of the people called Methodists.

In the year 1772, when Mr. Wesley was expected to preach at Swadlingbar, where I was then curate, I was meditating a sermon to preach against him; but this I postponed, and wrote down some queries to send him. I was, I know not how, prevented from sending them at *that* time; but when he came to Swadlingbar the following year, I sent them to him privately, though I did not subscribe my name. However, he guessed from whom they came, and returned a concise answer, and with it sent his Appeals. I was pretty well satisfied with his answer, and had a more favourable opinion of him afterward; though I still retained an aversion to lay preachers. His Appeals I did not then read; but laid them by till a more *convenient season*. I read them carefully in the following winter. Some parts of them I did not understand; particularly what he said of *faith*: other parts I did comprehend, and approved of, and in his last Appeal, in reasoning with the bishop of London, I saw clearly that he had the advantage of his lordship in the argument. However, I threw by the pamphlet again, and took little notice of it till three years afterward. In the end of the year 1775 I read Mr. Fletcher's Appeal; but without any great effect. I liked his style and the perspicuity of his arguments; and I was in a kind of rapture in reading his Address and the appendix. Yet still I did not bring the question home to my own heart, whether *I* was in that fallen state he so clearly described? I looked upon myself as *some* kind of a Christian, from the time I had been baptized. But whoever is fully acquainted with his own heart, will readily acknowledge that the picture of man, in his fallen state,

cannot be drawn in too black colours. His heart is *desperately wicked* ; yea, *every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is evil*, and that continually.

I had two old Latin books, one a comment on our Articles, the other a Summary of the Heads of Divinity ; both written in the last century by presbyters of the Church of England. These I sometimes perused, and they had a considerable weight with me. I had often before this applied in private to the *Father of light*, if I was in error, to let me know it. This prayer was at length answered ; for, reading a passage in one of these books, concerning justification and sanctification, I was struck with this thought : “ This is not a *new* doctrine.” I then had recourse again to Mr. Wesley’s Appeals, together with the Bible. Having read these with fervent prayer, my eyes were thoroughly opened ; and I gained more spiritual knowledge in six days, than I had before in six and twenty years.

I now clearly saw the plan of salvation, and perceived my own soul in its true colours. Wherever I was, either riding, sitting, or walking, the words of the heathen emperor, “ My friends, I have lost a day,” went like a dagger to my heart. “ Will not this heathen,” said I, “ rise in judgment and condemn *me*, who have lost the whole of my time ?” And the reflection of having done no good distressed me more than even the burden of my sins. Every prop being now removed, I saw I must be saved by *faith only*, or perish everlastingly. When I had sought mercy for a fortnight, without success, I thought I must repent more. This set me back for some time ; for I had none to converse with who knew the way of salvation. But God himself gave me encouragement by dreams ; and I had firm hopes which supported me under my heavy burden. When I had been about six weeks under conviction, on reading the first chapter of Isaiah in the church,

being the first lesson appointed for the day, I was much affected by it, thinking it very applicable to our times, and to the then state of the British empire; the American revolution having now advanced to a considerable height. After my return home I read over the chapter again, and determined to write a discourse from some text in it for the following sabbath; which I accordingly did, taking the second verse for my text. On the sabbath when I was to preach it, about the middle of the service, a man came into the church and handed me a form of prayer and a proclamation, for observing a general fast on the Friday following. I had but two or three minutes till I was to read the proclamation. Soon after, I went into the pulpit, where I delivered the said discourse with more than ordinary energy. I was so affected with a sense of what had occurred, and of my own unworthiness, that toward the conclusion of my discourse I burst into tears; the whole tenor of my sermon being calculated for the fast-day, as if I had been previously apprized of it; whereas I knew nothing of the matter till the moment when the packets were handed to me into the reading-desk. It was the thought of this, and the tenor of my discourse, which, besides the burden of my sins, served to sink me to the dust; and the language of my heart then was, "Lord, what am I? What have I to merit thy favour? I am the vilest of the vile; yea, worse than nothing!" But how did my poor neighbours account for my tears and distress? Why, by spreading a report that the packets I received contained press-warrants, on account of a threatened invasion; and that I was weeping through fear of the impending dangers of a war in Ireland.

I was in deep distress the remainder of that day and night, and did not sleep till about one o'clock: whether sleeping or waking I am not certain, I felt a kind of impression which is not easily described. On the night

following, about the same hour, being, I believe, asleep, I felt another impulse somewhat similar to it, which seemed to be accompanied with a dawn of light. On the third night, having sat up till two o'clock in the morning writing, I went to bed, but did not sleep for a considerable time. I then slept about two hours; and awoke out of a remarkable dream. While I was meditating a few minutes upon it, I felt a third impulse, which shook my whole frame, even every nerve and fibre in my body. It was as quick as lightning, so that I can compare it to nothing but the shock of electric fire; and it left me very weak for some hours. What seemed to me most remarkable in these impulses was, that though they varied a little, yet they all were somewhat similar to a sensation which I felt about eighteen years before, in the night, after I had been hearing John Manners preach. I do not recollect that I was any way affected by his preaching or conversation; but I have sometimes thought since, that perhaps that good man's prayers were heard for me; for I doubt not but he prayed for me *particularly* in private, knowing that I was then about to enter the college. This impulse (I mean the thoughts of it) often impressed my mind, though I never discovered it to any one, fearing lest it should be only the effect of imagination. Though I believe now that God was reconciled to me at the time when I felt the last of those three impulses; yet I could not then believe it, nor for a month or six weeks after. When I was enabled *fully* to believe that God was at peace with me, I was so collected, and my ideas so clear, that I think I could have written a sermon and conversed with five or six different persons at the same time; so that what is related of Julius Cesar did not seem to me incredible. But this did not continue more than a month or six weeks; which, I believe, I might have retained, had I not been unfaithful to

the grace given, and grieved the Spirit of God by doubting of my call to preach the gospel.

It was now that the father of lies began to spread many idle reports concerning me ; and these excited many out of curiosity to come from distant parts to my church. Several of my old acquaintances meeting me in public places, stole a glance at me to perceive whether I was really mad, as they had been informed. Meantime I wrote many letters to those clergymen with whom I was intimate before ; but though they had been formerly free, they scarce vouchsafed me any answer ; yea, and stood aloof from me as one infected with the plague. So that I was indeed as a sparrow sitting alone upon the house-top. Yet glory be to God ! I was not “ ashamed of the gospel of Christ, knowing it to be the power of God unto salvation ;” but I published the glad tidings, first in the church, and from house to house ; then in the parishes adjoining, as afterward in more distant places. And this I did, though at the same time I laboured under the most distressing conflicts with respect to my call. Two things served to keep me in the work : first, these words of St. Paul, “ Let every man abide in that calling wherein he is called ;” and next the thought of Jonah, and a fear lest God should pursue me with vengeance if I should fly from the work. Thus was I kept as it were between two fires, not knowing which way to turn ; and was dragged into public view in a manner so contrary to nature ; so that condemned malefactors going to execution could not find more anguish than I did when going into the pulpit.

Some time after, I began to use divine service and to preach in a barn, in a part of my parish which was about four miles from the church, and where the greater number of Protestant inhabitants lived. It was, I believe, on the third or fourth day that I read the service here,



when the sixth chapter of Judges was the first lesson. In reading this I was wonderfully affected ; the doubts and fears of Gideon being exactly similar to my own at that time. But when I came to these words :—" O my Lord, wherewithal shall I save Israel? My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house : " they were applied with such power, that I almost sunk down upon the floor, and with difficulty could read out the chapter. Soon after I began to preach at this place, the people near it proposed building a small chapel of ease. This, after some time, was carried into execution ; but not without difficulty : for the people who were eager for it at first were soon slackened, by a report, that I would shortly be removed by my superiors. So that I was obliged to get the building covered in and finished chiefly at my own expense. Hearing that a magistrate in the neighbourhood said, he would pull it down, or burn it, the next day I went to his house and dined with him, to see if he would say so to my face ; but he said not one word about it. As the owner of the barn could not spare it any longer, I was soon obliged to preach in the chapel for some time before it was glazed, and while the floor, which was of clay, was so wet that my feet would sink near two inches in it.

The doubts concerning my call to the ministry bore hard upon me still, and the thought of my insufficiency for so important a work weighed me down, and caused me to go heavily ; and frequently does even to the present moment. The parish was very extensive ; being, I think, not less than sixteen miles in length, a great part of it mountainous, and the whole so dreary, especially in the winter season, that no language can describe it. The wet bogs, drains, and mountain rivers which rise suddenly, rendered many parts of it impassable. There is a stratum of yellow clay lying very near the surface of the ground,

which is impervious to the rain that falls, and therefore lies upon the surface during the winter months, insomuch that I have been wet over my shoe when walking on the tops of the highest hills. I have frequently walked as well as rode through most parts of this parish in all kinds of weather. And often when the most violent storms were beating in my face, these words used sweetly to cross my mind, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Near the centre of this parish stands a high and remarkable hill called Knockninny, from which is the first prospect, for wood and water, to be seen perhaps in all Ireland.

On St. Stephen's day, in the year 1778, I rode about six miles to a place noted for wickedness, where people generally assembled on idle days, (by some called holy-days,) and spent them in drinking, and various diversions. Here I purposed to preach on the ruins of an old church if I could get any hearers; but not finding any, I rode on a little space, and then alighting, spent some time in meditation: on opening my Bible these words first appeared, "Is the seed yet in the barn? Yea, as yet the vine, and the fig-tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive-tree hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless you," Hag. ii, 19. On opening a second time, these words in the same chapter struck my eye, "and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

Three days after this, I went to the quarterly meeting of the Methodists, held near Enniskillen, where I was pressed and prevailed on to preach; and though it was so weak, yet it pleased the Lord to show some token for good. At the next quarterly meeting, held at Clones, I preached in the open air, and after preaching administered the sacrament in the house to three hundred persons, where the power of God was such, as the most experienced Christian there had scarcely known before. A few days after, on Easter-Sunday, I gave notice in the

church that I intended to preach the Tuesday following on the hill of Knockninny. This I did, partly to counteract in some measure the works of the devil, who was then to have a large concourse of his servants assembled at a cock-fight in a neighbouring town. I went to the place precisely at the time, and having first spoken concerning the occasion of our assembling, and the precedent for it ; and then showed that going from the church walls was not separating from the church ; I read my text in Greek, then in Latin, and afterward in English. “ Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” This I did with a view to the Papists who attended, and took occasion to show them how useless my speaking and their attending there would have been, had I continued to speak to them in an unknown tongue. The congregation was pretty large and behaved with decency ; but the poor Papists who attended were compelled by their priest to do penance for having gone to hear a mad heretic.

On the Whitsun-Monday following, I preached on the ruins of the old church before mentioned, on these words, “ He taught the people out of the ship.” Here, close to the old church walls, lived a man who excelled in all kinds of wickedness ; when I came the next time he offered me his house to preach in. I preached in it a few times, and then in houses adjoining. After this I was invited to preach in many distant places, which, though directly contrary to my natural inclinations and old prejudices, I reluctantly complied with.

The old cry about false prophets being now revived, and many of my parishioners being hurt by it, I thought it needful to point out to the people the marks of a false prophet ; and gave public notice a fortnight before of my intention to preach on that subject. The congregation on the day appointed was very large, and many Papists attended. I was remarkably struck in reading the first

lesson for the day, (the thirteenth chapter of Ezekiel,) to find it so expressly written against false prophets. The substance of this sermon I afterward published, and it was distributed through most parts of Ireland.

In the latter end of March, 1780, a woman was deeply affected in the church, and seemed in an agony while I was preaching. Some of the people carried her out, contrary to her desire, before the sermon was finished; and sprinkled her face with water, supposing it to be a fainting fit. But on the next Sunday, being Easter-day, the true Physician healed her sickness, while I was praying with her in the church after the congregation was dismissed. This was one of the first clear seals to my ministry which I had in the church. But I was more blessed in my own soul, as well as in my labours abroad. And it pleased God by me to open a door for preaching the gospel in several places where it had not been preached before.

July 16, 1780, I preached in the church on "Gallicared for none of these things." I had this text on my mind for a considerable time, but did not determine to speak from it till this morning. When a gentleman entered the church, with whom I had had some dispute four or five years before, whose character resembled that of Gallic, I almost resolved to speak from some other text, lest he should think I pointed particularly at him; but having prayed fervently and cast my care upon the Lord, I was enabled to speak with freedom. In the evening of the said day I baptized an adult person, who had before experienced the pardoning love of God.

August 20th and 27th, I preached in the open air in an old Danish fort, near the chapel, to a large congregation, some of whom were Papists, who, being convinced, set out to seek the Lord, and soon renounced the errors of Popery. In October following, being informed that one

who lived near a place where I preached occasionally was greatly prejudiced, though he had not heard me, and had complained both to the minister and the Popish priest concerning my preaching in their parish, I went to his house and told him I desired to talk with him ; he replied, he did not choose it, and ran out of doors. Some time after I went to his house to visit his father-in-law, who was sick. He came into the house, raging like a lion, with a hatchet in his hand, threatening to cut off one of my limbs, and calling me many names. But his family dragged him away. I then kneeled down and prayed with the old man ; so the devil was permitted to show his teeth, but could go no further.

January 23, 1781, I preached at Ballyconnell to a large congregation. While I was meeting the society afterward, two persons were set at liberty, and a backslider healed. Shortly after, I preached again at the same place, there being then a great revival there.

April the 25th, I preached in the open air near the old walls of the Castle of Enniskillen, to a careless people. Some ladies strolled about and diverted themselves in talking aloud ; and one gentleman kept his hat on, and seemed utterly insensible of what was saying. " God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world ; it hath pleased him by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

In June following, at the bishop's visitation, two doctors in divinity, entering into conversation with me, passed some encomiums, which I did not expect, on the two sermons which I had published. They said that my doctrines were Scriptural and entirely consentaneous to the doctrines of our Church ; but they disapproved of my preaching them anywhere out of my own cure. I took occasion shortly after to write to them upon that subject, and received their answers. One of them was calm and

friendly. After reminding me that I had a family, and that he, in a conversation with a nobleman who was allied to a certain bishop, had spoken favourably of me to his lordship, he said I might shortly expect promotion in the Church. The other doctor was very warm; but though his letters concerning irregular preaching are voluminous, yet they did not contain any convincing argument. I told both the gentlemen I never saw any fruit of my labours until I became irregular. And I still am persuaded that were I to confine myself to one congregation, I should not only soon become useless, but also lose the life of God in my own soul.

About this time I began to preach at a place called D——h, near C——n, and generally did so once a fortnight, while I remained in the country. When many began to be awakened, I explained to them the nature of a society, and joined fourteen of them together the first night; to whom more and more joined almost every week, till after some time they were about fourscore. The greater part of these, in a little time, obtained remission of sins. Meantime the vicar of the parish sent for me, and threatened to complain to the bishop; adding, moreover, that if I and those fellows who were itinerants continued to go on thus, the churches would soon be deserted. I replied, our preaching tended rather to bring men *into* the church; that I must obey God rather than man, and therefore was determined to preach whenever and wherever it suited my convenience. Shortly after, many who had been dissenters attended at his church, and received the sacrament from him: I also sent two Papists to him to read their recantation, as a proof that I was bringing men into, not driving them out of the church. Satan seeing now that he was likely to lose some of his subjects, opposition arose from another quarter. Some Papists one night waylaid my brother, who acted as a

leader to those that were awakened, in order to murder him; but having intelligence of it, returned by another way, and escaped them. The work flourished more and more after this, and I trust many of them stand fast to this day. While the work here was at the height, after I had preached one day at noon, and was riding to a town about two miles distant in order to preach in the evening, I was most violently attacked with my old temptation about preaching, and resolved to consult with my friends whether I should preach *any* more. But as notice had been given of my preaching that night, I was obliged to do it, and found more than ordinary liberty.

In August, 1781, I thought it necessary to bathe in the salt water for some time near Ballyshannon, and preached sometimes, while I was there, in the cabins on the seashore, and also in a Methodist society at some miles distant. While I was preaching here in a Popish woman's house, several of her neighbours, who were Papists, assembled in the kitchen, threatening to come and beat out all that were in the room: but the bridle was in their jaws.

In the years 1781 and 1782 I preached occasionally in seven different counties, and rode and walked about four thousand miles during that time. Herein I did the utmost violence to my natural inclination; and went through such fatigue and hardships, and bore such contempt and mockery, as I would not have done for all that this world can bestow. But I was kept in this way, partly by fear, lest I should offend God if I desisted; and partly by a desire of doing some good to the souls of men.

In May, 1783, I was invited to come over to London, to labour in conjunction with Mr. W——. As I saw reasons both for and against this, I laid them before my Christian friends, and with their advice, after I had received a second invitation, I consented to go in the strength of the Most High. To part with my parishioners,

among whom I had laboured near fourteen years, was trying work both to them and me ; indeed, to myself it felt as if body and soul were parting, for my bowels yearned over even those who were still hardened. But I was convinced the time was come, and concluding it was the will of God, resolved to comply.

Having settled my affairs, I parted with my parishioners on the 28th of September. I met and administered the sacrament to one part of them early at the chapel ; then went at the usual hour to church, and administered it there. Thence I returned and preached in the chapel in the evening. While I was preaching, the cries of the people were so great that my voice could scarce be heard : I trust some of them will remember that day, even to eternity.

It was my usual custom, chiefly for the five or six last years that I was among them, to meet them three times every Lord's day : (not indeed the same congregation, for they could not all conveniently assemble at any one place, the parish being extensive, and the roads bad.) Some of them I met, exhorted, and prayed with early at my own house, or some other house most convenient for them : then I went to the church ; and afterward returned, read the service and preached in the chapel in the evening. The week days I spent chiefly in visiting from house to house, and in preaching in other parts of the parish, or in more distant places.

October 3, I arrived in Dublin very weak in body, and with a heavy weight upon my mind. I seemed like Abraham, when being called, he obeyed, and went out to "sojourn in a strange country, not knowing whither he went." But what cannot an Almighty arm effect ? And nothing less than this could have supported me, seeing difficulties, great and various, stared me in the face, and were painted to my view in such direful colours ! In



Dublin I met Mr. and Mrs. F., both shining lights, and flaming with the love of God, and love to all mankind. October 9, I landed safe with my family at Chester, and on the 14th, after much fatigue, arrived in London. May I ever adore and serve that kind Protector who has conducted me thus far, and delivered me from many impending dangers !

I can never indeed sufficiently love and praise that God who hath done such great things for me ; who hath brought me out of darkness into his marvellous light, and given me a relish for spiritual enjoyments. Whatever deists, or devils may say, I not only believe, but experimentally *know*, that true religion, the religion of Jesus Christ, is ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, *the substantial reality of things hoped for* ; that it does not consist in speculative notions, or opinions ; no, nor in any external thing ; but in “ righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” I see that the ways of this religion are “ ways of pleasantness, and her paths peace.” I see that the *commandments* of God *are not grievous* to him that *believeth*. I see that those things, which ten years ago I thought impossible, are not only *possible*, but easy to be done *through Christ strengthening us*. I believe that Jesus Christ came to “ destroy the works of the devil ;” to *save us* from pride, from every wrong temper, and every evil desire ; to eradicate sin, and implant in its stead the *mind* that was in himself. I believe it is our privilege to be made *partakers of his nature, partakers of his holiness*, and to become *one spirit with the Lord* : that we must absolutely be *renewed* here *in the spirit of our mind*, and recover that *image of God* which we lost in and through the first Adam. I believe we must become *new creatures* in Christ Jesus, living branches in the living vine ; and that in order to live and bring forth fruit, we must “ abide in the vine.” I believe that the remedy which God hath found out “ for healing the nations,” was

intended by him to extend as far as the malady. I never was fond of controversy. I think, and let think. And yet I see it is necessary sometimes, for those who have time and abilities, to “contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.” I see what havoc that notion hath made in the church, both in the present and former ages, that “a man cannot fall from grace when once he hath received it.” Satan hath by many other artifices slain his thousands; but by this, I believe, he has slain his ten thousands, nay, his millions. As angels fell in heaven; as Adam fell in paradise; so I believe a man may fall from the highest pinnacle of holiness attainable upon earth; and so fall as to perish everlastingly; and that we are never beyond the possibility of falling on this side the grave. I trust, were I called to it, I could seal these truths with my blood. I wrote them chiefly for the use of my own children. And I hope this will prove profitable at least to *them*, when I am removed hence, and my body lies slumbering in the dust!

JAMES CREIGHTON.

*London, January 20, 1785.*

---

In 1783 Mr. Creighton came over to London in conformity to the request of Mr. Wesley, and was appointed to the City-road chapel; where he continued to officiate as the resident clergyman, till his advanced age and infirmities rendered him unable to attend to his regular public duties.

In 1784 he and Dr. Coke assisted Mr. Wesley in the ordination of Messers Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to the order of presbyters or elders; and he also assisted in the consecration of Dr. Coke to the office of a superintendent, or bishop, for the United States of America.

In the year 1807 Mr. Creighton published his "Dictionary of Scripture proper Names," a work which was highly commended by Dr. A. Clarke. In his commendatory letter to Mr. Creighton, the doctor observes, "I have read your remarks on the English language; and beg leave to say that they abound with good sense, and show a mature judgment. The language, though simple, and therefore best adapted to the subject, is nevertheless pure and energetic." \* \* \* \* \* "On pronunciation, I consider your remarks to be very judicious. In this, one rule should prevail, particularly in compound terms, that is, to pronounce the *component* parts as distinctly as possible, that the import of the word may be more clearly discerned: but the reverse is now generally practised; for in all such words the accent is laid as near as possible to the first syllable, if not on the first syllable itself. This renders pronunciation confused and indistinct. The word *cōncōrdance* may be adduced as an instance; which it seems is now in our hurried way pronounced *cōncūrdiance*. How can the etymology of such a word be discerned in this mode of pronunciation? Pronounce it as it should be, *con-cōrdance*, and to any scholar its meaning is at once developed. *Con*, with, and *cor* cordis, the heart, what is *with the heart*,—that is, something which perfectly resembles another, and in its sense and meaning agrees with it: as a concordance of the Scriptures, in all its words, books, chapters, and verses, perfectly agrees with that Scripture, the words of which it represents. But this is little in comparison of the depraved pronunciation used even by the higher ranks, as well as at the bar, and on the stage. If these, by their ridiculous *mincing* and Frenchified modes, be ruining our language; and the provinces or counties not far behind them in *sublime grammatical corruption*; need we wonder if the vulgar herd deal by wholesale in that which is *gross*?"

The prefatory remarks of Mr. Creighton, which extend through twenty-six pages of his Dictionary, closely printed in small type, are well worthy of an attentive perusal: but our limits do not admit of an extended notice of them in this place. I will only, therefore, introduce to the reader one marginal note, namely,—

“Having,” says Mr. Creighton, “spent a week in a large country town, about four years ago, I heard a minister preach, who resided there. In the course of his sermon he had occasion to use the word *offences* several times. But, as he laid the emphasis very loudly on the first syllable, and uttered the other two so rapidly as scarcely to be perceived, it was some time before I could understand him, and must own that his pronunciation was grating and *offensive* to my ear.”

The following obituary notice appears in the Minutes of the British Wesleyan Conference for the year 1820; with which this brief memoir will be closed, namely,—

“James Creighton, who was a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, and for some years bore much persecution on account of his zeal for God, and his steady attachment to divine truth. \* \* \* \* \* His moral conduct was unimpeachable, and having, through a long life, adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour, he entered into his eternal rest in the eighty-third year of his age.”

NOTE.—It will be observed that the words *priest* and *priesthood* are used by Mr. Creighton in the preceding memoir in relation to himself as a Christian minister: this is in accordance with the views and phraseology of the Church of England and Ireland, of which he was a member; but we do not believe that there are any *priests* in the Christian church except the ONE HIGH PRIEST of our profession, the Lord Jesus Christ. The words, therefore, according to our views, should be presbyter and presbyterial office.—*Am. Ed.*

## MR. SAMPSON STANIFORTH.

---

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I never thought I should be called upon to appear in print, or to give an account of myself, considering how many of my brethren there are who have not only deeper experience, but far greater abilities, and more time than I have. But since you desire it of me, I think it my duty to obey those that are over me in the Lord. I now therefore cast my mite into the treasury, and pray God it may be profitable to some soul! I shall first speak of my life from the time of my birth till I was about twenty-five years old; and secondly, from the time that God called me, to the present time. I am sensible my case is peculiar, both in a state of sin and in my conversion to God; and my account of it must be very imperfect, as I never kept any diary, and can only set down a few things that I can call to mind, after so many years.

I was born at Sheffield, in December, 1720. My father, who was a cutler, had thirteen children; but only four lived to years of maturity. There was no care taken in my education; none in the family having the form, much less the power, of religion: so that while I was young, I heard nothing about either religion or morality. Hence it was that I had no conviction of any kind, no fear of God before my eyes, no thought of his providence, of his sparing mercy, or indeed of his having any thing to do in the world. Nay, I was totally averse to all good, and hated the very appearance of religion. And in this deplorable state I continued till I was fourteen years of age.

I was then put apprentice to a baker. This was a very good place for my body ; but no care at all was taken of my soul : only that sometimes my master made me read on Sunday a chapter in the Bible. But I knew not what it meant, nor why it was called the word of God, or what people went to church for. From fourteen to seventeen, I was diligent in my business, and gave satisfaction to my master. But all this time, I never once thought, Why was I born into the world ? what is my business in it ? or where shall I go when this life is over ?

I was now fast bound with the chains of sin, filled with unholy desires, and, as often as occasion offered, bringing them into practice. And I had not the least remorse for any of the sins I was daily committing ; being as perfectly “without God in the world” as the beasts that perish. I now got into bad company, and by their advice and encouragement ran into open wickedness, gaming in particular, to the great disadvantage of my master, and the great sorrow of my parents. And yet I still had not the least compunction, nor any more sorrow for sin than a wild ass’s colt.

I began about this time to get into company with the soldiers that were in the town. And I frequently told my mother, that I had an inclination to go into the army. This troubled her much, and she often with tears expostulated with me concerning it. To keep me out of it, she used to supply me with money. But this only enabled me to keep more company, and to run into all manner of sin. Several times she fetched me away from my companions at night ; but whenever I could, I ran away from her, and got to them again ; and in this ungodly course I went on till I was about nineteen years of age.

One night I was in company with a neighbour’s son, who had been in the army some time, and was now absent

from it upon a furlough, to spend a few days with his friends. After we had been drinking till about eleven o'clock, he asked me whether I would not list. I immediately answered, I would; and he gave me three guineas, and a crown to drink his majesty's health: we continued drinking all night. In the morning one came in that knew me, who went and told my mother. She came with one of my sisters, and took me home, and put me to bed. Afterward she went and returned the money which I had received, and with a little more bought me off. I then went home to my master, who received me very kindly, and did not upbraid me with any thing that I had done.

But all this made not the least impression upon me. I felt no gratitude either to God or man. About eight days after, as I was one morning going out with my bread, I met the serjeant and two more soldiers, and told them I wanted to list. We went into an alehouse together, and I received the money from them. I sent the basket back to my master, and immediately went two miles to the justice's to take the oath. About a fortnight after, I left Sheffield. All my friends were in tears: but it made no impression on me; as I was not only fierce and passionate, but also sullen and malicious, without any feeling of humanity. Instead of weeping with those that wept, I even rejoiced in their sorrow.

Hence we marched for Edinburgh. We arrived there on the 15th of the November preceding the great frost. I was drafted into one of the companies that lay in the castle: there my hardships began. There were no barracks then, but we lay upon straw in the vault, and throughout the winter had but one fire for seventy men. Through my own sin and folly, my little pay was soon gone; and generally two days in a week, Tuesday and Friday, being the days before the pay-days, I had little or nothing to

eat. But even this, together with hard duty, made no manner of impression upon my heart. Nay, I became more hardened, and added profane swearing to my other sins. From thence we marched to Glasgow, where I several times heard that servant of God, Mr. Whitefield. But I had no conception of what he said, nor any desire to profit by it. We next marched to Ayr, where a kind Providence watched over me for good. For I and two more wild fellows took a boat, and rowed down toward the sea. But we had not skill to manage it, and the ebbing tide was carrying us down to the sea; when, just at the end of the pier, the boat gave a turn, and we caught hold of a post. Here we held, till help came; otherwise we had probably gone to the bottom of the sea, and to the bottomless pit at once, as we were all sinning with a high hand, drinking in iniquity like water.

From this place we marched to Perth, and lay there some time. During our stay, I paid my addresses to a young woman. But though she loved me, I did not behave to her with that honour I should have done. Just at that time the old Highland regiment came to quarter at Perth; and I was remanded to the other side of the river, to a little village called Bridge-End. She had some relations in this regiment; to whom she told what had passed between us. They sent for me, and, for some time, behaved with a deal of kindness, expecting that I would give them further promises of fulfilling my engagement with her. She was present at the same time. Finding I did not in any wise answer their expectations, they began talking together in their own language, and, as I could not but observe, with great warmth of spirit. Though I did not, she understood what they said, and endeavoured to pacify them. A little after she rose up, called me out, told me they were determined to kill me, and begged me, for God's sake, to return with all speed into my own quar-



ters: I took her advice, and returned immediately. I came to town again the next market-day. They heard of it, and were in search of me, being fully determined upon revenge. But she found me out first, informed me of their fixed resolution to murder me, and insisted on my crossing the water without delay. I ran to the water side. A boat was just going off, into which I stepped: but before we were half over the water, they came running down, with their swords drawn, to the river side. But they durst go no further, there being strict orders that none should pass the river.

We marched from Perth to Edinburgh, and thence to Shields, in order to embark with the rest of the army for Flanders. I had now been three years and a half in the army. We were eight days on our passage, and landed at Ostend, in spring, 1743. Thence we marched to Ghent, where we were joined by three regiments more, to guard the king's baggage and the army's clothing. This was a long and fatiguing march, as well as a dangerous one. We had above four hundred wagons, with other carriages, and several pieces of cannon, under our care; and expected every day to be attacked by a part of the French army. So that we were obliged constantly to march in order of battle, and had no settled camp, till we came to the grand army, a few days after the battle of Dettingen.

We then marched to the camp at Worms. There orders were read at the head of every regiment, that no soldier must be seen above a mile from the camp, upon pain of death; which was to be executed immediately, without the form of a court-martial. But this did not at all deter me. Although my life was in continual danger, I went on in the same course all the campaign, neither fearing God nor regarding man. One night in particular, as soon as we had pitched our tents, I set out, with some

of my comrades, to a little town which lay on the left of the camp. I was busy in drinking, when the captain with a guard of horse was coming to take us up, being appointed to seize upon all who were found out of the lines, and to hang up the first man without delay. I looked back, and saw the captain and his guard, who had shut all the gates. But I ran to the great gate, wherein was a wicket-door, which was only upon the latch. I slipped through, and before the gate could be opened for horsemen to follow me, I ran some distance from the town, and hid myself among the vines. There I lay till they were past, and then got into the camp just as the roll was calling.

After several marches, we came, toward the close of the year, to the camp near Spires. Before this, many grievous complaints had been made, of our soldiers plundering the country. To prevent this, it was again proclaimed at the head of every regiment, that the captain with his guard would be out every night, and had express orders immediately to hang up the first man that he took. I was close to the officer who read this; and to show how little we regarded it, as soon as he was gone to his tent, I and ten more of our regiment set out to plunder. We went to a village about two miles from the camp, to search for money, but could find none: however, we saw four bullocks, which we drove away before us. One of our officers met me, and asked whose they were. I told him they were some that we had bought: he said, "Very well," and went away. We sold three of them, and killed the other. The next day the poor people came to the camp, and found the three which we had sold. They made their complaint to the commanding officer, who immediately gave orders to apprehend us. But that very morning I had been sent to some distance from the camp on an out-party: so the good providence of God, though

I knew him not, once more preserved me from a shameful death.

Orders now came for our marching into Flanders, in which long march nothing material happened. The English army quartered in Bruges and Ghent: our regiment was in Ghent; where we had cold lodgings, little fire, and hard duty. I lay here three months, still continuing in my ignorance and rebellion against God. Meantime I had many sorrowful letters from my dear mother, with frequent little supplies of money. All the next summer we lay quite inactive, only plundering all the country. When I look back on those times, I know not which to admire most, God's goodness or my own wickedness: to complete which, I was now engaged with a negro-man's wife, who was passionately fond of me. But what is too hard for God? I was now about twenty-five years old; and had never yet once said, with any real desire, "Lord have mercy upon me?" But better days were at hand. The manner of God's bringing me out of the horrible pit I am next to relate.

After several marches, we came to another camp, where we lay nine or ten weeks. There was one in the same company with me whose experience was a direct contrast to mine. His name was Mark Bond. He was born at Barnard-Castle, in the county of Durham. For many years I was wholly without God in the world; but he feared God from three years old, and was under great concern for his soul, and many times prayed to God in secret. When his parents sometimes put him to bed, without saying his prayers, as soon as they were gone, he would rise and say them: otherwise he could not sleep. From this time, till he was seven years old, he was harassed with various temptations; but with one above all: he was violently and continually importuned to curse God, till one day, when he was about seven years of age, he

went into the fields, under a hedge, and actually did it. The moment he had uttered the words, he was in great horror and distress of soul: he then thought, God would no more have mercy, and that there was no salvation for him. Nevertheless he was, by the fear of God, restrained from outward sin. From that time till he was about eighteen the sorrows of his heart were enlarged. He concluded he must go to hell, and had no Christian friend to advise with. O what need have we to bless God for those helps he was destitute of! He durst not, however, put an end to his own life; but a recruiting party being in the town, he entered into the army, desiring and hoping that he should soon be killed. Upon this principle he listed in the company I was in; but his ways were not like those of other men. Out of his little pay he saved money to send to his friends. We could never get him to drink with us; but he was always full of sorrow; he read much, and was much in private prayer.

At the beginning of the campaign, he went to hear the preaching of John Haime, William Clements, and John Evans. There he found what he wanted. God soon spoke peace to his soul, and he rejoiced with joy unspeakable. He then began to think, whom he should open his mind to. He thought of several; but could fix on no one but me. He could not shake me off his mind, till he came to me and told me what God had done for his soul, adding, how desperate my case would be, if I died without experiencing the same. But all of this was strange language to me. I understood it not; and as soon as he was gone, I used to go to her I mentioned before, and make sport of all he had said. He came to me after, but I would not hear him. He then endeavoured to turn his thoughts on some one else; but I was continually on his mind, sleeping and waking. He could not rest, either day or night, but it was on his mind, "Go to Sampson."

He came to me, and told me what he had felt and suffered on my account. But I did not mind it, till he met me one time, when I was in distress, having neither food, money, nor credit. On his coming and asking me to go and hear the preaching, I said, "You had better give me something to eat or drink; for I am both hungry and dry." He took me to a sutler's, and gave me both meat and drink. Then he took me by the hand, and led me to a place erected about half a mile from the camp. I had no desire to hear any thing of religion, but on the contrary went with great reluctance. Who it was that was speaking I do not know; but this I know, that God spoke to my heart. In a few minutes I was in deep distress, full of sorrow, under a deep sense of sin and danger, but mixed with a desire of mercy. And now, I that never prayed in my life was continually calling upon God: in time past, I could shed tears for nothing; but now the rock was rent; a fountain was opened, and tears of contrition ran plentifully down my cheeks. A cry after God was put into my heart, which has never yet ceased, and I trust never will. My dear companion observed it with great joy. I was as it were knocked down like an ox. I had nothing to plead, having never had either the power or the form of godliness. No works, no righteousness was mine. I could only say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

From that hour, as much addicted to it as I was before, I never swore an oath; and I was never more overcome by liquor, though I had been so enslaved to it for several years. Indeed there was a constant cry in my inmost soul, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" When the preaching was over, my dear companion took me in his arms, blessed God with a joyful heart, and said he would come the next night, and fetch me to the preaching. I went to my tent full of sorrow, thoroughly convinced what a miserable state I was in, and seeing all my sins stand in battle array

against me. All the next day I was longing for the time of hearing preaching and seeing my dear companion. But I had not patience to stay so long. I went to the place some time before they began. There were several soldiers of other regiments come before me. Some were reading; others conversing of the things of God. Some at a little distance were singing; and some down in a corner were at prayer. I was walking about, my heart full of sorrow, my eyes full of tears, wishing I could pour out my heart to God like them, when one came to me, and kindly asked me, if I came to preaching, and how long I had done so. I answered, "Last night was the first time." He took me aside, and said, "Let us go to prayer." I said, "I cannot pray; I never prayed in my life." But he went to prayer with me. By this time my dear friend was come, and rejoiced to find that I was there before him. The more I heard, the more deeply was I convinced of sin, and of my danger on account of it. He asked, if I had a Bible or any good book. I said, No; I knew not that ever I had read any. He said, "I have a piece of an old Bible; take it. I can do better without it than you." I took it as a great treasure, and read in it with great joy. The next day my old companions found me out, and called me many names. But it made no impression upon me at all, as I was every day more and more resolved to save my soul. I spent more and more time in reading and prayer, and missed no opportunity of hearing the word. I was deaf to all the allurements of my comrades, regarding neither their evil nor their good words. I had now a tender conscience; I could neither drink, swear, game, nor plunder any more. I would not take so much as an apple, a bunch of grapes, nor any thing that was not my own.

My companion, who had been employed for some time in an out-party, now came home to the company. He

immediately took me to be with him as his comrade, and watched over me, as a tender parent over a beloved child. He inquired into all my affairs, and finding I had contracted some debts, said, "The followers of Christ must be first just, and then charitable. We will put both our pays together, and live as hard as we can; and what we spare will pay the debts!" From this time, I continued, by the grace of God, seeking him with my whole heart.

Many trials I had, partly from my old companions, partly from the sins I was before given to. But glory be to God! I was preserved from both, and enabled to persevere in the way of duty. My companion took every step he could to help me forward in the ways of God. Nevertheless, all this campaign I was in great distress of soul; yet I hated sin and followed God, though I knew he was angry with me. The more I heard, and the more I read the word, the greater was my pain; for I saw more clearly my miserable state, both by nature and by practice. All the remainder of the campaign I was in deep distress, having sometimes a little hope, sometimes none. But still I was convinced the way of duty was the only way of safety.

The work of God now greatly increased among us. And indeed the change which God wrought upon me gave a great alarm, not only in our company, but through the whole regiment. My dear companion and I began to reprove sinners, to invite them to hear the preaching, and to exhort as many as would hear, to turn to God and flee from the wrath to come. And it pleased God to bless our weak endeavours, so that before the end of the campaign we had ten in the regiment I was in, who were closely united together, and were joined in such love for one another, that we had in effect all things in common. And thanks be to God, the flame spread through all the camp, so that we had a large number of hearers. And

more and more were continually added to the society. I still went on my way sorrowing, but bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. When the camp broke up, we marched for winter quarters, part to Ghent, and part to Bruges. I was afraid we should be left without a preacher; but God took care of this also. For as the army was divided, so were the preachers. John Haime and John Evans lay at Bruges, and William Clements at Ghent, where our regiment was. I rejoiced much at hearing this; although it could not take away the load of guilt which pressed down my soul.

As soon as our regiment was settled at Ghent, we hired two rooms: one for preaching, and one for private meetings; for, when off duty, we met twice a day. Here my sorrows increased. It was strongly suggested to me, that my day of grace was past, that I had sinned the unpardonable sin, and it signified nothing to strive any longer. O what distress my poor soul was in! I thought the very stones in the street, and the timber in the wall, cried out against me for my enormous wickedness. I felt that truth, "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear?"

I told all my troubles to my dear companion, who truly sympathized with me; but told me, I should not be thus long; for the time of my deliverance was at hand.

Yet I went on in the same state, having little hope of mercy, till one day I was ordered on duty at one of the out-posts. I was in deep distress, which my companion observed, and when he parted from me said, "I hope you will have better news to tell me when you see me again." When I came to the guard-house, I longed to be alone, that I might pour out my soul before God. I thought myself the most miserable creature on earth, far beneath the brute and inanimate creatures; all of which answered the end of their creation, which I have never done! From



twelve at night till two it was my turn to stand sentinel at a dangerous post. I had a fellow-sentinel ; but I desired him to go away, which he willingly did. As soon as I was alone, I kneeled down, and determined not to rise, but to continue crying and wrestling with God till he had mercy on me. How long I was in that agony I cannot tell : but as I looked up to heaven, I saw the clouds open exceeding bright, and I saw Jesus hanging on the cross. At the same moment these words were applied to my heart, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." My chains fell off ; my heart was free. All guilt was gone, and my soul was filled with unutterable peace. I loved God and all mankind, and the fear of death and hell was vanished away. I was filled with wonder and astonishment. I then closed my eyes ; but the impression was still the same. And for about ten weeks, while I was awake, let me be where I would, the same appearance was still before my eyes, and the same impression upon my heart, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

The corporal came at two o'clock to relieve the sentries, but I could not think the time was half gone. When I came into the guard-house, I was full of matter, and longed to tell what God had done for my soul. But I did not dare to cast pearls before swine. I longed for my dear companion, that we might rejoice together. As soon as the time for relieving the guard came, I hastened to the room where I lay. As I was going, my companion was looking for me ; and, before I could speak, said, "I know God has set your soul at liberty ; I see it in your countenance." I then told him all ; and after we had taken some refreshment, we went to our little company, and concluded the day in prayer and praise, magnifying God for all his mighty works.

During our stay in Ghent, we met twice or thrice a day, either for preaching, prayer, or to tell our experience to

each other. And God increased our number every day, so that we had now some in almost every regiment. I was still happy; but found a strong desire to be more holy, that I might be more happy. And from this time, Rev. and dear sir, I found my heart united to you, and to the people that were under your care, of whom brother Clements was often speaking; and I truly loved them whom I had not seen. Indeed, I considered myself as a member of the same body, and longed greatly to see them.

About this time I began to think of my parents and family. My dear mother had, from time to time, sent me little supplies, either in money, or such other things as she knew I wanted. I now sent her a long letter, asking pardon of my father and her for all my past disobedience, and telling them that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins. I thanked her for what she had done for me; but desired she would not send any thing more, as I knew it must straiten her, and I had now learned to "be content with my wages." This letter they could not at all understand; and it was handed about from one to another, till it came to one Mr. Wadsworth, a dissenting minister, who, having known what manner of life I led before, could not in any wise believe it. However, he wrote me a friendly letter, and sent me a Bible, which was more welcome to me than gold; as was a Common Prayer-book, which my mother sent me. A few days after, my letter came into the hands of Mr. John Wilson, who was then one of the chief persons in your society, and much alive to God. He sent me a comfortable letter, and a Hymn-book, which much refreshed my soul. About this time you sent some books over, which were of great service to us.

On March 26th, 1745, the French, taking the field before us, opened their camp with seventy-six thousand men,

and above a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon. We were then ordered to march out of our quarters ; but before we could come up, they had laid siege to Tournay, and had entrenched themselves up to the very chin. After several little movements, we were all assembled on the 19th of April, under the duke of Cumberland, being in all, besides the train of artillery, forty-six thousand men.

By this time, having given way to unprofitable reasoning, I lost my rapturous joy, and a kind of heaviness followed ; but, blessed be God, the evidence of my acceptance was not interrupted.

We then drew so near the French, that we could hear their evening and morning gun. But between us and them there was a wood, which we were obliged to cut a way through. All the pioneers were employed in this. On the 28th I was ordered to go and guard some baggage ; but on the 29th, early in the morning, the corporal brought me word, “ You must go into the ranks ; for before to-morrow night we shall have a battle.” When I came into the ranks, I felt some fear : but as we came near the French army, we halted a little. I then stepped out of the line, threw myself on the ground, and prayed that God would deliver me from all fear, and enable me to behave as a Christian and good soldier. Glory be to God, he heard my cry, and took away all my fear. I came into the ranks again, and had both peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. By this time night came on. We were ordered to lie on our arms. Toward morning, part of the army marched through the pass which we had cut through the wood. My dear companion and I had sweet communion together, having constant and strong confidence in God. As soon as the dawn of the day appeared, we were ordered to advance. The column on the right had passed through. I was in the second column. But all the road

was made almost impassable, which broke the head of our column. And in the mean time, the French batteries playing upon us, did us much hurt. We wheeled off, in order to get into the plains of Fontenoy. I had not marched far before we met a horse without his rider, and the lower part of his head taken off by a cannon-ball. A little after, I saw one of the guards lie dead; and soon after many more. We still advanced, and drew up in line of battle in the plain of Fontenoy. The French before us were entrenched up to the neck, and many batteries of cannon were playing upon us. I was in the front rank, and the left-hand man joining the Dutch. We stood there till the Dutch turned their backs and marched away. I was then left exposed to a battery on the left, and the batteries and small arms in the front. Soon after, our regiment, with some others, were ordered to advance and attack the French in their trenches. We marched up boldly; but when we came close to the town of Fontenoy, we observed a large battery ready to be opened on us: and the cannon were loaded with small bullets, nails, and pieces of old iron. We had orders to lie down on the ground; but for all that, many were wounded, and some killed. Presently after the discharge we rose up, and marched to the first trench, still keeping up our fire. They gave way; but when we entered, batteries in the flanks were opened, which tore our regiment so, that we were obliged to fall back into the rear. Yet we rallied, and renewed the attack. But it was to no purpose. All the day I was in great spirits, and as composed in my mind as if I had been hearing a sermon. I neither desired life nor death, but was entirely happy in God. Night coming on, the retreat was beaten, and the whole army marched away, leaving our cannon, and sick, and wounded behind us. The profane sinners now received reproof, and promised to become new men; and though

most of them soon forgot their resolutions, yet in some there was a lasting change.

As soon as I had opportunity to speak to my dear companion, he told me, it had been a happy day to him. He had received two musket-balls: but one struck him on the right thigh, and hit on two seven-penny pieces that were in his pocket; (they are of a mixed metal, about the size of half a crown;) it appeared to him, as if he had received a blow with a stick. The other struck him on his left side-pocket, upon a clasped knife, and bent the blade, and loosened it in the handle. So that we may well say,—

“Go and return secure from death,  
Till God command thee home.”

I had eaten nothing that day but a little brown bread, and drank only a little water. But I was very thankful, as if I had received it immediately from the hands of God.

We marched all that night and the next day, and more and more of our scattered army overtook us; but many lay down on the ground, and could go no further. Glory be to God! he gave me constant peace, and strength to keep with the main body, being always one of the first, till we encamped at Lessines. We then began to inquire, who of our society was gone home. We missed many out of our regiment. One was saying, “O how happy I am!” and just as he spoke, a cannon-shot came and took off his head. We lost four preachers, and many of the society. But my dear companion, with the other brethren in the regiment, were still as the heart of one man. Such was the religion of the soldiers at this time, before any of them were corrupted by new opinions! I then thought, “This state of life is the only one to love and serve God in: I would not change it for any other under the sun, upon any consideration whatever.” How did this sweeten all the fatigues, and hardships, and dangers I had to go through!

Glory be to God, I rejoiced in them all. Meantime I was continually exhorting sinners to repent. And they would bear it now, as the French were so near us, and we knew not how soon they would fall upon us. The whole army was drawn up in order of battle, expecting to be attacked by them every day. But instead of this, they pushed forward and took Ghent, and afterward all Flanders, as far as Ostend.

About this time the lieutenant and paymaster of our regiment sent for me, and said, "My servant was killed at Fontenoy, and I intend to take you in his place." As he had always been particularly kind to me, I knew not what to do. It was not a command, but a favour offered, which he left to my choice. I earnestly prayed to God for direction. I then returned him my sincerest thanks for his kind offer, but said, I could not accept of it. He looked earnestly at me, and said, "Pray, what are your reasons for refusing it?" I answered, "Sir, the first is, I could not have time to attend preaching, and meet with my Christian friends; the second, I should be obliged to do on the Lord's day what would give me pain, and displease God." He replied, "I like you the better for being so honest. Go your way. I will be your friend."

A short time after, there came an order for ten men out of our regiment to go to the train, and learn the exercise of the great guns, to supply the place of those that were killed at Fontenoy; but active, sober men, and such as could be depended on. The corporal came and said, "Get yourself ready; for you must leave the regiment, and go to the artillery." I was sorry to leave my brethren, but could not in conscience disobey a lawful command. My brethren also were sorry; but we encouraged each other, that we should not be far from one another. So we prayed and parted. My pay was now near double to what it was before. And I had two of the society with

me, brothers Hammond and Hodges ; both much alive to God. I was kept in constant peace, athirst for God, and longing for more of his image. As often as I could, I went to see my dear brethren ; and we always prayed and praised God together. And even the rest of the company were glad to see me ; for I have frequently remarked, there is a kind of affection in the army toward one another, which is hardly to be found elsewhere.

I had not been many weeks in my new employ, when we heard there was a rising in Scotland, and that the rebels had defeated the king's army at Preston Pans, near Edinburgh ; and orders came that the greatest part of the English army should march directly for England. I was sent back to my own regiment. We made forced marches, and the transports being ready at Helvoetsluys, we soon came within sight of land. In all these movements I found no decay of inward life. I knew it was my duty to obey my superiors, and God made it my pleasure. He was always before me in every place ; and I could boldly testify,—

“Thy presence makes my paradise,  
And where thou art is heaven.”

Our regiment and two more landed at Gravesend, when we marched on, and encamped at Deptford-heath, in the latter end of October, 1745. The next Lord's day we of the society went to Bexley church. We lay at Bexley three or four weeks, and constantly attended on Mr. Piers's ministry, and there we received a larger account of you. O, how did I then long to see you ! Thence we marched to Deptford. When we were drawn up there in the Broadway, William Giles came and invited us to his house, where we spent the evening in singing and prayer, and my soul was much refreshed. My mind was still kept in perfect peace. It was nothing to me where I was,

at home or abroad, in the field or in the church, marching or sitting in the closet. We made long marches from hence, hearing that the rebels were marching swiftly southward. Wherever we were, I inquired if there were any Methodists, that we might sing and pray together. The army was assembled when we came to Stafford; and we were ordered to be ready at a minute's warning. We had not been here many hours, when at ten o'clock, in a cold frosty night, about the middle of December, the drum beat to arms. We were drawn up in order of battle, and marched on, our spies informing us that in two hours we should meet the rebels. We had then orders to load our pieces, and to be ready at the word of command.

We marched on, and the morning came. The rebels, now hearing of us, turned off for the Derby road, thinking, it seems, to pass us and get to London. By this time we had got to Stone, where we learned they were returning northward. On this the main army was ordered to pursue them, and some regiments to march back to London, lest they should give us the slip. Our regiment was one of these. We were to lie in the towns and villages near London. I had a great desire to lie at Greenwich or Deptford. We made long marches; and when we were near London, orders came, that our regiment should be quartered at Greenwich and Deptford. I was glad, though I knew not why; for I had no knowledge either of the place or the people. On Christmas-eve we came to the place; and I was quartered in the next public-house, which is the very house where I now live.

On Christmas-day we went to church, and spent the evening at brother Giles's, in singing and prayer. We lay here till April, 1746, but had orders not to go above a mile from our quarter. Hearing these orders read, I went to the commanding officer, who said, "Well, Sampson, what do you want?" I said, "Leave, sir, if you please,



for two or three of us to go to London twice or thrice a week." He said, "For what?" I answered, "To hear preaching." "What," said he, "cannot you go to church?" I said, "Yes, sir; and I count it both my duty and privilege so to do. But I am much united in affection to the Rev. Mr. Wesley; and I want to see and hear him, and to be joined with him and his people." He looked at me, and said, "Well, thou art the same honest man as before." He immediately wrote an order for me and one or two more to pass to and from London as often as we pleased. He added that he knew Mr. Wesley, and was glad I had made so good a choice. When not on duty, we likewise met twice a day in the old room at Deptford, to read the Scriptures, and to pray and praise God. At this time I had no thought of preaching, though my dear companion often told me, God would call me to it before I died.

Twice a week, during our stay at Deptford, I went to the Foundery, or West-street chapel, where I was always profited by your preaching. Here I became acquainted with her that is now my wife. After much consideration and prayer, I mentioned the subject of marriage to her. After a little while she answered, if I was out of the army, and in some way of business, she had no objection. So here it rested for the present.

One day a member of the society desired me to go to Eltham with a message. As soon as I came thither, (it being three miles from our quarters,) a serjeant and two soldiers seized me as a deserter. They brought me back as such to Greenwich, and carried me before the commanding officer. I told him the real case. He asked them, "Had you any passport?" On their answering, "No;" he said, "Make haste home, or I will order you to the guard-house." He then smiled upon me, and said, "Go to your companions."

One night, as we were coming from the Foundery, a

soldier met me and said, "Make haste home; for early in the morning you are to march for Canterbury and Dover." I was a little struck, and did not find my mind so passive in all things as it used to be. When I came to Deptford, I found the orders were come. We spent great part of the night in prayer and praise, and early on April 22d, with many tears, left our dear friends at Deptford.

Before we set out, my dear companion was fully persuaded that I should get out of the army. But he prayed that he might not live to see it; and he believed God would grant his request.

We stayed awhile at Canterbury, and met twice a day; but there was then no society there. Thence we marched to Dover Castle. Here I received a letter from Deptford, informing me, that my dear friend would be glad to see me once more. Having procured a furlough for fourteen days, I set out on May 28th, about four in the afternoon, and, not stopping, reached Deptford (sixty-seven miles) about four the next day. On the 12th of June (my permit being then out) I was married. The same day a letter from my officer informed me, that our regiment was embarking for Holland, and I must come immediately. So I took leave of my wife and friends, on my wedding-day, and set out without delay. The next day we began our march to Gravesend, where the transports lay. We embarked on the 20th of June, with a fair wind. But when we were within sight of land, the ship wherein I was, stuck fast upon the sand-bank: we lay rolling about, every moment expecting the ship to break. Many of the soldiers cried to God for mercy: our little company, seizing the opportunity, exhorted them to forsake sin, and turn to God; which they promised to do, if he would please to spare them. All this time my soul was truly happy. I had peace with God, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

While preparation was making to save as many as

possible, when the ship should sink, she gave a spring, and got off the bank : and in a few hours we came safe to Williamstadt. We marched immediately to camp, (it being the latter end of June,) being commanded by Prince Charles of Lorraine. In a few days we came within sight of the French army. My wife had desired me to apply for my discharge. But I thought this was not the proper time, as we expected a battle every day, lest I should seem afraid to fight, and so bring a scandal upon the gospel.

But we found those of our society that had been in Scotland had lost their simplicity, and zeal for God ; and instead of that, spent all their time in disputing about this and the other doctrine. But blessed be God ! he kept all in our regiment of one heart and of one mind. We were almost always in sight of the French, they watching our motions, and we theirs. Meantime provisions were both scarce and dear ; but I did not now dare to plunder. We marched through orchards and vineyards, where there was plenty of fruit, which I knew would be taken away in a few hours. But as faint as I was, I durst not touch it, because it was not my own.

All this campaign I had a solid dependance on God, and a thankful remembrance of all his mercies. And every thing which I had, I received as from the immediate hand of God. One day, as we were marching, the bread-wagons did not reach us in time ; and we were in great want of bread and of all provisions, while, being on our march in sight of the enemy, we expected a battle every hour. We wanted water likewise ; and here we saw the difference between them that feared God and them that did not. The latter cursed the king, and blasphemed God. And how did they groan and fret under their hardships ! On the contrary, the former could cheerfully say, " The will of the Lord be done ! " My soul was

more than usually happy, rejoicing in God my Saviour. I felt much love and pity to my poor fellow-soldiers, and exhorted them to turn to God, and then they would find themselves happy under every trying circumstance.

As I was marching in the ranks, I felt hunger bite hard, but had not a murmuring thought. I lifted up my heart to God, and knew he could supply all my wants. I had not gone far, before I found a piece of brown bread, which I picked up, and received as out of the hand of God. We had but little rest: we kept Maestricht in our rear, as a place of retreat, if needed. And all our provisions came that way. This the French knew, and laboured to cut off our communication with it. The season began to be cold, and the two armies were so near together, that whichever retreated first would be sure to suffer greatly. The French began to cut off our supplies. Prince Charles observing this, thought it high time to prepare for a retreat into our winter-quarters. So he ordered, that a strong party should advance in front of the army, to keep the French in play, and make them believe he intended a general action. This consisted of two English regiments, whereof ours was one, with some Hanoverians and some Dutch, making in the whole about twelve thousand men. On September 30th we had orders to hold ourselves in readiness, and after gun-firing, to leave our tents standing, and march silently about a mile in the front of the camp. Prince Charles ordered our commander to go to such a distance and fortify his men; and to keep his post till further orders, or till he could keep it no longer.

We all thought the army was to cover us, in order to bring on a general engagement. But they were ordered to retreat with our cannon and baggage to the other side of the town. This was done by two o'clock the next day. We advanced according to order, after my companion had given me to understand that we were to be parted that

day. As soon as we came to the place appointed, we were drawn up in line of battle. We English posted ourselves in some gardens and orchards, which were some little cover. At day-break the whole French army advanced in seven or eight columns, all covered with horse on the right and left. They advanced slowly, while the queen of Hungary's light-horse and theirs skirmished between us and them. Here we lay, waiting for orders to retreat to our army. But the prince forgot to send them, being busy with his cups and his ladies. So our brave general kept the field all day, in spite of the whole French army. I bless God I found no fear, but constant peace, and my spirit rejoiced in God. While we lay on our arms, I had both time and opportunity to reprove the wicked. And they would bear it now, and made great promises, if God should spare them, of becoming new men. By this time the French came very near us, and a cannon-ball came straight up our rank. But as we were lying upon the ground, it went over our heads. We then had orders to stand up and fire. The right of the French being closely engaged with the Dutch, the French centre advanced, and fired on us and the other English regiment. The rest of the French inclined to the right of us, in order to get round us. They quickly took our two pieces of cannon, and immediately turned them upon us. We were then ordered to retire with all speed into the plain, where we expected to find our own army. But they were far enough off, their general taking no thought for us.

All this time I found a constant waiting upon God. All fear was removed. I had no tremor on my spirits, and the presence of God was with me all the day long. My dear companion was on my right hand, and had been all the night. As we were both in the front rank, a musket-ball came and went through his leg. He fell down at my feet, looked up in my face with a smile, and said, "My

dear, I am wounded." I and another took him in our arms and carried him out of the ranks, while he was exhorting me to stand fast in the Lord. We laid him down, took our leave of him, and fell into our ranks again. In our further retreat, I again met with my dear friend, who had received another ball through his thigh. But his heart was full of love, and his eyes full of heaven. I may justly say, "Here fell a great Christian, a good soldier, a faithful friend." I was obliged to leave him; for the French pressed hard upon us. Yet I was enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." I trust I have seen many that were perfected in love; but none so full of it as my dear companion. He was always cheerful, but never light: always in prayer, but a man of few words. Not a thoughtless look or an idle word could be observed in him. Even to this day, when I think of him, it is both with pleasure and profit.

Night came on, but the French still pressing upon us, we retreated all night, till we came near Maestricht. It rained very hard, being the 30th of September, and was exceedingly cold. Toward morning, being out of the reach of the French, we had orders to halt. We had no tents, and it continued raining: however, being well tired, I lay down on the wet ground, put my knapsack under my head, and soon fell fast asleep. In the morning we had orders to march and join the grand army. The small remains of those whose lives had been so vilely thrown away, did so without delay.

But now I began to miss my companion. It seemed as if I had lost part of myself. I could have wished, that I had died by his side; but I found I must look up, or I should sink into deep waters. I cried unto God, and he heard my prayer, and turned my heaviness into joy. After a few days, we marched to our winter-quarters, which

were at Bois-leduc, in Holland. About this time I received letters from my wife, begging me to apply for my discharge, and she would send whatever money was wanting. I made this a matter of earnest prayer, and, after several steps, procured a promise from our colonel to discharge me for fifteen guineas. I wrote to my wife, and she sent a note, which was readily accepted. But in the mean time Colonel Philips sold his commission. Our new colonel consented to discharge me for the same sum, on condition I would be his servant till we came to England. But just at that time I fell ill of a fever, and orders came for our regiment to be clothed, and to take the field. But no clothing came for me, and my arms were taken from me. I was still very ill, when the colonel told me he would set out for England in a few weeks: "And if you are not able to go, I must leave you behind me." This threw me into much heaviness; but I cried to the Lord, and he soon turned it into joy. The fever instantly left me, and, by the time appointed, I was able to attend on the colonel. My brethren and I spent great part of the night in commending each other to God. I attended the colonel to Helvoetsluys, went on board the packet, and landed at Harwich in eight-and-forty hours; and on February 22d, 1748, found my wife and all my friends well at Deptford.

About this time, John Hyatt and I, with two more, being one night met together at the preaching-room, one Richardson, a sailor, who once ran well, but had for some time turned back to folly, earnestly desired to meet with us. The more we prayed for him, the more his sorrows increased; till his cries were so loud, they almost drowned our voices. After the rest, I began to pray a second time. He fell back, and began beating himself against the floor, so that we could hardly hold him down. I prayed on. Suddenly he gave a spring out of our hands, jumped up,

clasped his hands, and cried out, "He is come! He is come! Jesus is mine! My soul is happy!" By this many of the neighbours burst in, thinking we were killing one another. He went home rejoicing in the Lord, and in two or three days went to sea. But we never heard of him since. So I trust he has gone to paradise.

In the midst of much outward reproach, I now felt many inward conflicts. I found the remains of inward corruption, and earnestly longed to be delivered from them. So much the more were evil reports spread, even by good men, who followed not with us; and I always observed, the more devoted to God we were, the more did the enemy rage.

The disturbances at the time of preaching were now so great, that I was obliged to apply to a magistrate. But after a few of the rioters were taken up, we had peace, and our congregation increased. I then appointed a meeting on Thursday evenings, wherein I read part of one of your sermons. Some of your preachers likewise came down from London, and the congregations increased so that the room could not contain them. I consulted you. You advised me to get a piece of ground, and build. I immediately opened a subscription, and having procured ground, desired three builders to give in their proposals. This was in the year 1757. As soon as the building was finished, (which, with the galleries, cost two hundred and twenty-five pounds,) I paid the master-builder what I could, and offered him a note for the rest. He said, "No; your word is sufficient." I was also in debt to my mealmen; yet I durst not withhold my hand from the cause of God and the poor, though I stood alone, not having one to help, or stand engaged with me.

It was about six years before I could discharge this debt: I then gave up the lease to you. I had for some time had thoughts of preaching, but they were now stronger



than ever. So I gave now and then a few words of exhortation ; and I was so engaged herein, I could not retreat. Whenever I thought of desisting, I was unhappy. I then made it matter of earnest prayer, till I durst delay no longer ; but, with much fear and trembling, undertook to preach on those nights when the preachers did not come, though my fear was so great, that it sometimes affected my body. For some time I preached at Deptford only ; but on my signifying my desires to you, you accepted me, and gave me a little to do in town.

My time was now fully employed. I had my own business to mind, together with that of the society. I was preacher, steward, visiter of the sick, and leader of the bands and classes. Meantime I had many reproaches, both from others and from our own people. But God blessed me in all these things, and gave me to see some fruit of my labour : for from time to time some were convinced of sin, and others justified. And, indeed, had it not been for this encouragement, I could not have continued to preach.

In the year 1760 both my labours and my trials increased. I was made one of the four constables of our parish ; and on October 27th I was sent for to the bench to be sworn in. Many laughed, and many gazed at me as a monster ; but my soul was composed and happy in God. When they called me to take the oath, I told them, "I cannot in conscience." One from the bench cried out, "Fine him twenty pounds, and he will swear any thing." I answered him, "No, sir, not for twenty worlds." After many more words, the chairman said, "Mr. Staniforth, shall I make an oath for you ?" I said, "Sir, if you please." He then proposed the following, to which I had no objection : "Sampson Staniforth, of the parish of Greenwich, is by us appointed to serve the office of con-

stable for one year, in the best manner he can, according to his own way of thinking."

When we were dismissed, I gave my partners to understand that I should be punctual in the execution of my office. And one of them being a great swearer, I told him, "You must not swear before me, as I will make you pay for it." When the quarter sessions came on, the high constable summoned all the constables in the hundred (four-and-twenty) to meet. When I came into the room, one and another cried out, "No swearing now!" After dinner they drank the king's health, which I drank, and a second, which I drank in water. The next man cried with a loud voice, "Here is Dr. Squintum's health." When it came to me I stopped, and he said, "What, Mr. Staniforth, will you not drink that health?" I answered, "I pray God to bless that good man, and give him health and length of days." I then left the room. And from that time they left me to do just as I would. This was a trying year; but God enabled me to give satisfaction to the parish, while I found his presence always with me, and my soul prospered much. I was the next year overseer of the poor; but I had three good partners, and passed through the year with great ease.

About this time I had a remarkable deliverance. There was a heavy brick building belonging to my house, and that of my neighbour. Just as I came out of it one day it fell down: had it been a minute sooner, I should have been buried in the ruins.

It was now that the great revival of the work of God began. Observing some wildfire mixed with that holy and heavenly flame, I endeavoured gently to check it both in public and private, exhorting all to keep close to the written word; to hold fast whatever was agreeable to the Scriptures, and let all the rest go.

In the year 1764 I was sent for by Mr. M. to his house. The messenger told me he wanted to speak with me, and I must come immediately. When I came, I found the Grecian bishop with him, who ordained me and three more. But finding it would offend my brethren, I have never availed myself of it to this hour.

God now gave me, what I had so long desired, to owe no man any thing; and I went on cheerfully, though not without many temptations, both within and without. But I still resolved to lay out myself and my substance for the cause of God and the good of souls. And he was still pleased to give me some tokens for good, both in preaching and visiting the sick.

There now came into our neighbourhood one Mr. B., a dissenting minister, a man of strong sense and great learning. He applied to me to serve him with bread. He was open and free in his conversation; but of a warm temper. He often called upon me, and we commonly got into dispute, particularly about original sin and justification, in which I always found great freedom of speech and enlargement of heart. One night he stayed to supper; and as he declined it, I asked a blessing, concluding as usual with, "for the sake of Jesus Christ." Observing he smiled, I said after supper, "Sir, is it not for his sake that we receive every blessing?" This introduced a warm dispute, till he rose up in a great rage, and, striking his hand upon the table, said, "I expect no more benefit from the blood of Christ, than from the blood of a bull." From this time we did not converse together, till he fell sick, and was visited by Mr. Dornford. He asked him whether he knew Mr. Staniforth, and begged he would send me to him. Mr. Dornford told me; but before he spoke, a letter came, desiring me to come immediately. He received me with great kindness. I spoke to him of the nature and necessity of repentance, and showed it was needful

to feel our original corruption, as well as our actual sins. While I was speaking, the tears ran down his cheeks, and my soul was much drawn out to God for him. I asked, "Shall I go to prayer?" He said, "By all means; and may God hear your prayer!" Afterward he said, "Dear Mr. Staniforth, my time is short: be with me as much as you can." This was Thursday. On Friday I went again, both morning and afternoon. I spoke closely to him, and repeated what he said at my house. He said, "I thank God and you that I see my error. O pray for me!" On Saturday likewise I was with him twice; and he felt more and more the need of a Saviour. I then said, "Christ must be equal with the Father, or he cannot atone for our sins." He answered, "He is; and I believe he is able to save all that come to God through him." We then prayed to him with joy and confidence, and praised God together. On Sunday I was with him twice. The second time (which was about eight in the evening) he said, he should live but a few hours. I asked, "What is the ground of your hope of heaven?" He replied, "The mercy of God, through the merits of my dear Redeemer: and my soul is happy in him." I said, "Then your sentiments are greatly changed." He said, "Yes; blessed be God for his grace, and you as his instrument. I now know there is no way of salvation but through Jesus Christ." He kissed my hand, and about eight hours after gave up his soul to God.

I now began to be more employed in and about London. Every Sunday morning I walked thither to meet the preachers, and to know my appointments. I had six miles to walk all weathers; and in the winter, to go and come in the dark, as I was always in town at eight in the morning, and took care to be at every place where I was appointed. And I had many sweet hours of communion with God as I walked by the way. I made it a rule,

from the beginning to this day, to bear my own expenses. This cost me ten or twelve pounds a year; and I bless God, I can bear it. Besides meeting the class and band, and visiting the sick, I preached five or six times in the week. And the Lord gives me to rejoice, in that I can still say, "These hands have ministered to my necessities."

In the year 1771 we began preaching at Rotherhithe. I went in my turn, and found my heart much united to the people. So was theirs to me. The place we preached in being both dear and inconvenient, they thought of building, and applied to me concerning it. I laid the case before you. You encouraged me to go on; and said you could not do much, but you would help me as far as you could. I took a piece of ground, and set the workmen about the building, which cost in all near two hundred pounds. For this I alone stood engaged. I lent upward of a hundred pounds, and was near eight years before I could get the building entirely out of debt. I still constantly preach there once a week, and every first Sunday in the month. I soon saw some fruit of my labours here also. W. C. being convinced of sin, and under the afflicting hand of God, I desired our friends, both at Rotherhithe and Deptford, to set apart a day of prayer on his behalf. God heard the prayer, restored him to his right mind, and filled his heart with love. About the same time, Samuel Gibbs was convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. He was afterward settled at Snowsfields, and became eminently useful. He died happy in January, 1781, and I preached his funeral sermon.

I was still frequently tempted to leave off preaching; but generally when the temptation was strongest, I was informed of another and another that had received a blessing. Glory be to God, who does not send us a warfare at our own cost! I was now likewise blessed in

temporal things, having enough both to answer all demands, and, if I was called away, to leave a little to my wife, who has for many years laboured under a severe asthma, and been thereby cut off from all the public means of grace. For her sake I began to preach in my own house every Monday evening. And hereby I have reason to believe some good has been done to others also. Several of my neighbours come to hear me, send for me when they are sick, and will do nothing in the way of charity without me.

About this time I had several invitations to leave the connection: one offered me forty pounds a year, another fifty; urging that I might hereby save myself much fatigue, as well as considerable expense. But whenever I thought closely upon the subject, three objections occurred:—1. It was clear God had blessed me in this way; therefore I was afraid to go out of it. 2. I saw how much hurt had been done in the society by these separations. And, 3. As to money or ease, my heart is not set on money, and I am not weary of my labour. So upon the coolest reflection I can still say, and that with full purpose of heart, "This people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God."

What further God has for me to do in his cause, and for the good of souls, I know not. But I trust he will enable me to be more thankful for every mercy, more faithful to grace given, and more fruitful in those few days which he may please to add to my life.

My present method is, I pray with my wife before I go out in the morning, and at breakfast-time with my family and all that are in the house: the former part of the day I spend in my business; my spare hours in reading and private exercises. Most evenings I preach; so that I am seldom at home before nine o'clock: but though I am so much out at nights, and generally alone, God keeps me

both from evil men and evil spirits. And many times I am as fresh when I come in at night, as I was when I went out in the morning. I conclude the day in reading the Scriptures, and in praying with my family.

I am now in the sixty-third year of my age, and glory be to God! I am not weary of well-doing. I find my desires after God stronger than ever; my understanding is more clear in the things of God; and my heart is united, more than ever, both to God and his people. I know, their religion and mine is the gift of God through Christ, and the work of God by his Spirit. It is revealed in Scripture, and is received and retained by faith, in the use of all gospel ordinances. It consists in an entire deadness to the world, and to our own will; and an entire devotedness of our souls, bodies, time, and substance, to God through Christ Jesus. In other words, it is the loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, and all mankind for God's sake. This arises from a knowledge of his love to us: "We love him because we know he first loved us;" a sense of which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us: from the little hereof that I have experienced, I know, he that experiences this religion is a happy man. Two verses in one of our hymns exactly describe what I now feel, and what I desire:—

"If so poor a worm as I

May to thy great glory live,

All my actions sanctify,

All my words and thoughts receive!

Claim me, for thy service claim

All I have, and all I am.

"Take my soul and body's power,

Take my memory, mind, and will,

All my goods, and all my hours,

All I know, and all I feel:

All I think, and speak, and do:

Take my heart, but make it new!"

Thus, Rev. and dear sir, I have given you a little sketch of God's dealings with me. May the Lord bless you with length of days and much happiness! So prays your much obliged son and servant in the gospel,

SAMPSON STANIFORTH.

---

*To the Editor of the Methodist Magazine.*

*London, April 3d, 1799.*

THE holy apostle exhorts us to hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end; hence we may safely conclude, that this is the will of the Lord concerning us. But all that are brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God are not so happy as to take the apostle's advice; and for this reason, some pious and prudent people have objected to the publishing any account of the Lord's gracious dealings with us, till we have finished our Christian warfare, lest we should dishonour our profession. Nevertheless we have abundant reason to praise the Lord that there are many who, from the time that they first tasted of the good word of God, and felt the powers of the world to come, till they finished their Christian race, continued steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And it is worthy our observation, that a great many whose lives have appeared in the Methodist Magazine have been of this number, and have joyfully testified with their dying breath, that God had followed them with mercy and loving-kindness all their days, and that they could then cheerfully give up themselves into his hand, firmly believing that they should be happy with him for ever.

As some account of the Lord's dealings with that good soldier and faithful servant of God, Mr. Sampson Stani-



forth, was published in the Magazine for 1783, it will afford your pious readers pleasure to hear, that he finished his course with joy.

After he gave up his business, he removed from Deptford to Shoreham, at the desire of the pious and venerable Mr. Perronet, where Mr. Staniforth was made very useful among the little flock in that place; but he returned to Deptford, to his old friends, a few years back, where he spent a great part of his time in visiting the sick and the poor, and such as were in distress. Those who were in want he relieved according to his ability. He was a man who for many years had the glory of God in view, and the salvation of souls very much at heart, and he spared no pains in gathering poor wandering sinners into the fold of Christ, and encouraging those who were brought in, to press forward toward the mark, that they might obtain the prize of their high calling. He was of a remarkably calm, mild temper, and of a peaceable and healing spirit; and was exceedingly useful in promoting peace and love among the people. He has long been a father to the Deptford society, as well as to some others in that neighbourhood.

When the infirmities of age came upon him, he bore them with entire resignation to the will of that God whose mercy and love in Christ Jesus he had long and so largely experienced. And when visited with affliction (which he frequently was for several years before his death) he possessed his soul in patience, and looked to the hour of his dissolution with joyful expectation of being for ever with the Lord. He was neither molested with gloomy doubts, nor painful fears; nor was the enemy of souls permitted to distress him. But as his heart stood fast, believing in the Lord, so his evidence for heaven continued unclouded to the last moment of life. He said to a dear friend, a few days before his happy spirit took its

fight, "I think my experience may be all summed up in these few words,—

"In the heavenly Lamb,  
Thrice happy I am,  
And my heart it doth dance at the sound of his name.'"

The night before he died, a friend was sent for to wake with and attend upon him ; who, when he came into his room, asked Mr. Staniforth how he was. He replied, "I am exceedingly ill, and I thought I was going home." He then repeated many particular passages from our hymns, and among the rest the following :—

"O for a heart to praise my God,  
A heart from sin set free,  
A heart that always feels thy blood,  
So freely spilt for me!"

And soon after,

"My God, I am thine,  
What a comfort divine,  
What a blessing, to know that my Jesus is mine!"

And added, "O what a mercy, to have God to go to in a time of trouble!" Seeing his servant standing by, he said, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, and hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast to the end. The Lord bless you. May all the blessings which the Lord poured out upon the head of Joseph be poured out upon you!" and very soon after he calmly and quietly breathed his last.

Thus died Sampson Staniforth, who had steadily walked with God for nearly sixty years. He preached the gospel for almost fifty years, and finished his course in the seventy-ninth year of his age. The little property he had left, having no children, he gave by will to his relations. But it was remarked by many, that not one of his Christian friends was invited to his funeral: yet the preachers in town willingly attended him to the grave,

though not invited ; so did several of those who loved him from Deptford ; and the society showed their affection for their deceased and faithful minister by putting the whole chapel in mourning on the occasion. So exceedingly little do distant relations in general think themselves obliged to their deceased friends for any thing they leave behind them. How much more commendable is it, to dispose of our property at death for the honour of God, as he inclined us to do while living !

---

### EXTEMPORE LINES

ON THE DEATH OF MR. SAMPSON STANIFORTH, OF DEPTFORD.

SAMPSON, in youth—like the unbroken steed—  
With British soldiers, rank'd in flaming red,  
To Flanders march'd to meet the Gallic foe :—  
'Twas there the youth first learn'd himself to know.  
Back to his native country he returns ;  
A different flame now in his bosom burns.  
Discharged from royal William's loyal band,  
Enlists, in Jesu's nobler ranks to stand.  
No changeling he ;—firm in his Master's cause ;  
A Bible Christian ;—subject to its laws ;  
A soldier, husband, Christian, man of worth,  
Such died the venerable STANIFORTH.

G. W

## MR. THOMAS TAYLOR.

---

I WAS born November 11th, 1738, in the parish of Rothwell, near Leeds, in Yorkshire. I was the youngest of eight children, seven of whom were sons, and the eldest a daughter ; so that I was a seventh son. My father was a tanner, and had something considerable to begin the world with ; but proving unfortunate in business, he brought his family into a low condition, especially the younger part ; and this fell particularly on me, who was the youngest of all by six years. I have heard much said in praise of my mother ; but she died before I was a year old, which, I apprehend, was no small loss to me. I can but just remember my father ; so that I was bereaved of both father and mother before I was six years of age. I then fell into the hands of a step-mother for some time, who took care of me, as if I had been her own child. I had, rather early, something of a desire and turn for learning. My father and mother being Presbyterians, I got the Assembly's Catechism off by heart when I was but four years old, and said it to the minister. I had some visits from the divine Spirit very early ; but having no one to encourage me, the impressions wore off. My natural temper was active, wild, and very mischievous ; and I was so known an offender in little wild pranks, that I have often suffered, though not guilty : for when the real delinquent could not be found out, the saddle was laid upon my back. Being of a turbulent, daring cast, I often, when very little, ran into great dangers, by climbing up into high trees, and doing many other things of a like kind. When

I was between five and six years of age, as I was walking by the river Calder, and trying how near the edge I could go, the ground gave way, and I fell in where it was very deep. My father and some other men were at a little distance, and heard my cries as I fell in. They ran to me, and soon got me out, and found I was not much worse. I often rambled away, even at that age, so that nobody knew where I was ; and being frequently pinched with hunger, I sometimes stole fruit. Indeed I often rambled so far that I knew not where I was ; and sometimes, having played some unlucky frolic, I was afraid to return home. One day, being in my wandering humour, I got to a great farm-house, and being sauntering about, a large fierce bull-dog ran at me, seized me and got me down, but only tore my clothes : how I was delivered I know not, for I do not remember that any one was near.

Being seven years of age, I contracted the abominable habit of cursing and swearing, which never left me till I was brought to know myself. Being of a passionate temper, (O could I write this in tears of blood !) I frequently swore in a most dreadful manner ; nor did I stick at lying. Yet, young as I was, I was not without checks from God ; and had I been under the care of any that knew how to manage me, this might have prevented many years of horrid impiety.

When I was between nine and ten years of age, my eldest brother took me to his house, designing that I should be brought up to his business, namely, a clothier. Nothing could have been more detestable to me. I abhorred the name of a clothier ; yea, I heartily despised both him and his trade. Hence I was not very studious to please him ; and this brought what I thought hard usage upon me ; so that after some time I determined to decamp. But the question was, whither should I go ? This I knew not ; for though I had several relations in

good circumstances, yet I knew I should meet with a cold reception from them, when they knew that I had run away from my brother. Nevertheless, being determined not to stay, my resolution was to go somewhere.

One morning, having done something amiss, rather by accident than design, I expected to meet with correction ; and, to avoid it, set out, fasting, about the middle of November. It was a hard frost, and I was in a poor habit, having on the worst clothes I had. I wandered all that day, not knowing, nor indeed much caring, what would become of me. I was very hungry, and sorely pinched with cold. I picked the hips from the hedge, and about eight o'clock at night came to another brother's house, eight or nine miles from the place where I set out in the morning. When I came there, though I was cold and hungry, I durst not for some time go in, as I was not in the dress of a visiter. However, at last I ventured in, and my reception was far more agreeable than I expected : the next day I was treated civilly, so that I began to hope that I was to stay there, which I greatly desired. But, alas ! on the third day I was escorted back to my former quarters, though much against my inclination. Nevertheless, I determined to make my escape again the first opportunity ; which in a fortnight after I effected.

I remembered my nurse used to show great fondness for me ; I therefore set out, and marched to her, about nine or ten miles off, in the same garb in which I had fled before. Though I was received tolerably well, yet my dress showed me to be a runaway ; so that the family were at a loss how to treat me. This was not far from that brother's house where I fled before, to whom I now paid another visit ; but here I was treated roughly, and in a few days was, by main force, conducted back to the place from whence I came. Yet I was determined not to stay there. But I thought I should succeed better if I could

decamp in a better dress ; and therefore considered how to get some of my better clothes. I got a quantity of them together, and resolved to march by night, seeing there was no probability of doing it by day. This was a somewhat daring attempt for a boy of ten years old. But the clothes were found before night, and the cause suspected, for which I underwent a severe beating. This was one of the worst methods that could have been taken ; for it only confirmed my resolution not to stay. I then thought the likeliest way to effect my escape would be to go on a Sunday, when trimmed in my best fashion. This I therefore resolved upon, and accordingly I put on two shirts, that I might have a change ; but unfortunately it was discovered as soon as I came down stairs, so that I was ordered to strip, and underwent again a severe discipline.

I was now a rather close prisoner, and especially on Sundays. However, one Sunday, being equipped in my best, I waited all day for the opportunity, but could not get my hat. Finding that to be the case, I set out bare-headed, and ran for life ; determining that night to go to my old nurse, and then to ramble where I should not be known. I got thither, and was vastly pleased with myself, thinking now I should gain my utmost desire ; but while I sat by the fire, who should come riding to the door but my brother, who had taken horse and pursued me ; and though it was now night, yet some people had taken notice while it was day-light of a strange boy going in great haste without a hat. By this means he easily guessed where I was gone. Back again I was brought ; but with as fixed a resolution as ever that I would not stay. Being now almost a close prisoner, I was kept in a mean habit ; but that was nothing to me. A day or two after Christmas-day I made my final escape. And now I entered upon a scene of distress indeed ! What I endured from hunger and cold, no one knows but myself.

My case was singular: I had relations living in amience, on the right hand and on the left, while I should have been glad of the fragments which their servants, yea, perhaps, their dogs despised. That winter was particularly severe, and it was just in the depth of it. My friends thought to starve me back again to my eldest brother; but I had an unconquerable aversion both to him and his trade. I would just remark here, the impropriety of fixing boys in any business which is so much against their inclinations. It seldom fares better with them than with me, and sometimes proves their ruin.

Finding that nothing could make me submit to return to my eldest brother, the other, to whose house I first fled, took me, and after some time put me to a business that I less disliked, though not quite to my mind. Indeed, my mind inclined more to learning; but as I could not have my wish, I was willing to comply.

As I grew up, my habits of sin multiplied, and my mouth was fraught with oaths, lies, and deceit. I loved sinful recreations and foolish pastimes to an excess, and soon became a dexterous gambler, especially at cards. Having much pride and little money, I was the more intent upon furnishing myself in that way. I wished to associate with those whose circumstances were better than my own, and strove to equal them in dress and every thing else. During this time, the Spirit of God strove with me, and sometimes good resolutions took place for a season; but no sooner did a horse-race or a party of pleasure offer itself, than my resolutions died away, and I was worse than ever. Yet I read the Bible, and got much light into many things. I knew that I had not faith, and when at church, (for I went to church sometimes,) I durst not repeat the creed; for I knew I was no believer; and though I could lie at other times, I would not lie there. I likewise knew that I was not born again; but what the



new birth was, I knew not, nor had I any to tell me. I knew that I was far from being what I ought to be, but I thought I would be better when I was a little older.

When I was about seventeen I heard that eminent servant of God, Mr. Whitefield. The first sight of his countenance struck me. There was an immense multitude, and his voice was like a trumpet. His text was Rom. xiii, 11 : "It is high time to awake out of sleep." The whole of the discourse was attended with an amazing power, I believe, to many. I am sure it was to me. When he addressed himself to people of several ages in the large congregation before him, and among the rest, to the young people, that took great hold of me. I did not observe any thing extraordinary in what he said, as to his matter ; but there was such an unction in his word as I had never felt before. I went home full of good resolutions now to break off all my bad practices. But, alas ! this also proved as a morning cloud. I was surrounded by such as were utterly abandoned : so I soon returned with the dog to his vomit. Nay, I was worse than ever ; till happening to read the Pilgrim's Progress, I had another powerful visit from the Lord. But that also remained only a short time ; for my passions hurried me on with surprising impetuosity.

I now left off attending any place of worship, and gave full scope to every wretched disposition. I had a brother living at some distance, who had been awakened some time. But I had long taken my leave of him, as his conversation did not at all suit my inclination. I used to wrangle with him as well as I could, yet this generally left a good impression upon my mind. But now I never came near him, being wholly taken up with things of another kind. In the midst of my career I was very miserable ; and when I was among my jovial companions, and saw every one around me all joy and gladness, I was

often exceedingly melancholy and dejected, though I assumed an air of cheerfulness. And often have I lain down in great terror, thinking, "Perhaps I may awake in hell!" A whim now came into my head to go into the army; and a party of horse being at this time recruiting in Wakefield, and an acquaintance of mine entering himself a volunteer, I needed but little solicitation to follow his steps. I therefore went to the officer, and, being young and pretty well made, was very acceptable. But, upon trial, I was about half an inch beneath the standard, and therefore he could not take me.

This gave a check to my career in some measure; but I soon returned to my former conduct, abandoned to every thing that my age and circumstances could admit of. I cannot say that drinking had much influence over me; yet I have been intoxicated several times: and once, not long before I was awakened, and coming home in the night with others, we had a ferry to cross; while the boat was coming, being bereaved of my senses, I stumbled, and had it not just then come to shore, I should have fallen into the water, and in all likelihood have been lost eternally. I took my leave of getting drunk, and do not remember that this sin ever took me captive again. Nevertheless, in other respects I was as bad as ever, nay, even worse; for as I was now grown up, my habits of sin were stronger and more numerous.

As I had ceased to go to any place of worship, I had in a good measure dropped my reading too. Still my conscience was not quite asleep: I had very uneasy moments. But I ran into wild company and diversions as soon as I could; and it was a mercy that I had not more money, for that would have added fuel to the fire; and though nothing is impossible with God, yet, in all human probability, I should never have been saved. Thus lay my poor soul in ruins, when, in the beginning of the year

1758, the Lord, by a kind chain of providences, was pleased to arrest me in my full career of sin.

There was a young man with whom I had been a companion for several years: he had been in a fever, and during his illness was awakened, and had contracted an acquaintance with the Independents. He persuaded me one Sunday to go and hear their minister, whom he was accustomed to hear: to oblige him I went. The text was, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." While the preacher was describing the maladies of a sick soul, several drunken men came in, and were very rude. Partly with what the minister said, and partly by being struck with their behaviour, I never felt myself so affected in all my life. I plainly saw there must be a change, or I was undone for ever. Yet I cannot say that I was in such terror as might have been expected from so stubborn a sinner. The usual temptation awaited me when I came home; nor did I wholly escape free. But my desires and convictions continued all that week, and on Sunday I went to the same place of worship again; and I now plainly saw that I must give up my companions, or I could not be saved. But here was a difficulty: though very young, I had contracted an acquaintance with a young person who was as thoughtless as myself. Being brought up in the same neighbourhood, a fondness had insensibly stolen upon us both. Yet as I was determined to save my soul, and as she had a perfect antipathy to every thing of the kind, it was not long before I got disentangled: so that snare was also broken.

I now began to cry to God in private, but was sorely tempted the first time I went to my knees. I was afraid, either that I should drop down dead, or that the devil would appear to me, if not take me away. I frequently thought that Satan was behind me when I was praying,

and was afraid to open my eyes lest I should see him. Indeed, it is an exercise which the devil does not love, and which he will use every means to prevent. I began now to contract an acquaintance with the people of the meeting, and was much noticed by them. Several of them had been joined with the Methodists, and gave such an account of them that I had no desire of being acquainted with them. One Methodist lived near me, and had a public meeting at his house every Sunday evening, to which I sometimes went. He was useful to me, and might have been more so; but being more attached to the other people, I kept company with them only. Alleine's Alarm now fell into my hands. It described my case as exactly as if it had been written on purpose; so that I prized it above rubies. I had gracious visits from the Lord, exceedingly sweet to my soul; but no one said, "Now believe, and thou shalt be saved;" so that I was like Samuel, I knew not the voice of the Lord. I began now to meet with a good deal of opposition: my acquaintance laughed me to scorn; though whenever they came near me, the Lord opened my mouth in such a manner, that I could easily put them to silence. My master (for I was not yet out of my apprenticeship) was sour, and much out of humour at times. He, and others, whom I was in some measure under, had no objection to a reformation in me; but now they supposed I was as mad one way, as I had been the other. I continued to press forward, and the Lord continued to visit me with tastes of his love, which were exceedingly precious to me. The time of Wakefield races drew on: many expected that my religion would then be at an end, as they knew how passionately fond I was of those vanities: and indeed I was not without fear myself; not that I found the least inclination to any thing of the kind; yet I knew not how it might be when the time came. But God took care of that; that

fear was of his planting, and was a means of driving me nearer to himself.

One Lord's day evening I retired to my apartment for my usual exercise of reading and prayer. While I was calling upon the Lord, he appeared in a wonderful manner, as with his vesture dipped in blood. I saw him by the eye of faith, hanging on the cross; and the sight caused such love to flow into my soul, that I believed that moment, and never since gave up my confidence. I had not then any particular promise applied; but was enabled to cast my soul upon that atoning sacrifice which I saw was made for my offences. I had nothing to trust in but the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel. But,

"O the rapturous height  
Of that holy delight,  
Which I found in the life-giving blood;  
Of my Saviour possess'd,  
I was perfectly bless'd,  
As if fill'd with the fulness of God."

As I had no one near to tell what God had done for my soul, I was in a short time brought into doubts; but yet I could not give up my confidence. Some time after, the two following scriptures came to me with remarkable power: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," John x, 10; and, "Blessed and holy is he who hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death shall have no power," Rev. xx, 6. These two testimonies were indeed words in season, and very precious to my soul. I had some difficulties soon after to grapple with, and at times was brought very low; but still his grace was sufficient. I often thought, if I was to live at Leeds, where there were such plenty of religious means, it would be almost as the gate of heaven to me: and in particular, I expected

great assistance from the fellowship of those who were strong in grace. But God would have me dependant on himself alone ; for though I went to Leeds, as I was of a shy disposition I had no fellowship with any one. I was then tempted to think that there was not much life there : at least, I found very little. It was a very dull time with me : yet I kept close to God in prayer ; and he kept my soul in a measure of peace.

From thence I removed to another place, where there were few that pretended to religion. I feared lest now I should be overthrown : but I found here two or three Methodists, who had preaching sometimes. I soon got among them, and often found it a blessing to my soul : particularly once in hearing that plain, honest man, Paul Greenwood, whose word left a lasting impression on my mind. But though I met with them at times, yet there was a discord in our manner of speaking, which prevented my close union. From thence I removed to Wakefield, where my first religious acquaintance lived, and with whom I had the greatest union. I kept on in much simplicity, watching unto prayer, and still found reading very profitable ; as indeed it was from my first setting out in the ways of God.

But now a new scene opened : I began to think that I was called to preach. This had in a measure been pressed upon my mind for some time ; but whether it was a delusion from Satan, or a call from the Spirit of God, I knew not. I dreaded the thoughts of running before I was sent.

I likewise thought that a preacher should have learning, which had been much neglected in me. Yet the impression grew stronger and stronger. I wanted to recommend my Lord to ruined sinners, and I thought I could rejoice if I was torn in pieces for so doing. I had neither ease, nor honour, nor profit in view ; but wanted to be an in-

strument in God's hands of saving souls. The word of the Lord was as a fire shut up in my bones. At the same time I was so conscious of my inability for the work, that I was ashamed to intimate my thoughts to any one. O how have I agonized with God, not to suffer me to engage in such a work unless it was his will ; and if it was, to point out my way ! That awful declaration, Rev. xxii, 18, 19, stood seemingly in my way : " For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." It is probable I might understand these words in too general a sense ; but they seemed as if they pointed out a very narrow path for a gospel minister to go in ; and made me cry out, " Who is sufficient for these things ?"

But God answered for himself from the first of Jeremiah : " Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee ; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God ! behold, I cannot speak : for I am a child." (My very objection ! ) " But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child : for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces : for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Now, if any passage was ever applied to any one by the Spirit of God, surely this was to me. Therefore, I determined to make the attempt : but still I knew not how to set about it ; for I

was ashamed to declare my mind to any one, from a sense of my absolute unfitness for the work. I had never spoken a word in the way of exhortation, but had frequently prayed in public. At length one or two of my acquaintance asked me if I did not think I was called to preach. With much confusion, I answered in the affirmative.

From that time I determined to make an attempt; but the question was, where? At last I resolved to begin on a Sunday evening, and pitched upon a very profane place to make my first effort; thinking an ignorant place was the fittest for an ignorant preacher. When I came within sight of the village, my spirit was ready to sink within me; not for fear of persecution, though the place was rude enough, but from a sense of the importance of the undertaking. When I came to the place, the heart of the honest man who had invited me failed him; therefore I found his house was shut up. This rather damped me; but another door being immediately set open, I went in. A house full of people gathered: I stood up, sung a hymn and prayed, but did not give out a text; for as I had never before opened my mouth to exhort in public, I did not know whether I could say any thing or not. But I found assistance in giving a word of exhortation, and I believe it was accompanied with the power of God to many present. I appointed to go again the next Sunday; and then chose Matthew v, 3, for a text, and found life and liberty in speaking, and a blessing attended it.

The tidings of my preaching soon reached the congregation where I was a hearer; and happening to have no preacher the following Lord's day, they requested that I would supply the place of one. This was a hard task, for there were several before whom I was much afraid to stand up; however, I durst not decline the offer. I spoke from John i, 29. Here again my mouth was opened, and



my tongue was loosed, so that they objected nothing : undoubtedly they made allowance for a young speaker. Being now in some measure satisfied that I ought to speak in God's name, I embraced many opportunities of going to several places.

I now wanted to improve my little learning ; and having a trifle of money, I entirely devoted myself to that purpose, not knowing nor caring how I might be disposed of, only I wanted to be useful.

After some time, being destitute of a minister at the place where I was a hearer, they desired I would accept the place ; accordingly, I undertook to preach to them a while, till we should see a little further. The congregation was but small ; however, I had the satisfaction to see it increase, and some sinners were convinced. But some of the leading men having frequently veered about from one system to another, seemed now mightily charmed with Antinomianism.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh's works were highly approved of, and some of Dr. Gill's writings. But a Mr. Relly was the great apostle among them, on account of his famous Hymn-book, and his Treatise of the Union of Christ and his Church. He came into the country a few weeks ; and by him I was much blinded, and for a time all seemed right which he advanced. But in one particular sermon he explained his sentiments freely, when I was fully satisfied that he had sadly perverted the truth. I went to him the next day, and ventured to object against what he had advanced the preceding night. He was not prepared to answer some things which I had objected, but attempted to puzzle me by starting other questions. I gained but little satisfaction from this interview : but still I was rather tinctured with Antinomianism ; yet I laboured to live near to God. I earnestly begged to be entirely right, both in principle and practice.

A particular providence now occasioned my coming among the Methodists. I went one time to hear Mr. Whitefield; and Mr. Hanby, who was with him, I was informed, was to preach the next Lord's day. I determined to hear him, as the time did not interfere with our time of worship. When I went, I was amazingly struck to find him in a far more evangelical strain than I expected. I had now and then gone to hear the Methodists before, but was generally disgusted. But the present sermon had quite a different effect. I was now more reconciled to the Methodists than I had been, and began to be acquainted with the people. Reprobation was what I never could digest; and I was not without my doubts concerning final perseverance, but could not endure to hear it spoken against. But I was most rooted in the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, taking it for granted that it was true, because Mr. Hervey had written in its defence.

About this time, being invited to preach in the Methodist preaching-house, I accepted the invitation. This gave great offence to my own people, several of whom were run-away Methodists. Meantime I began to think of joining the Methodists, which my congregation suspected: the heads of them met me, and made me some offers of a temporal kind. But I told them, I thought Providence called me to an itinerant life, and I wished them to look out for one who might suit them. As I knew few of them would go with me, I recommended Mr. Ingham to them, who had formed an itinerancy, and wrote to Mr. Ingham myself on their behalf. He came, and several of the preachers in his connection; but as Mr. Ingham's people soon after broke in pieces, the meeting relapsed into its former state of Independency. Being now disengaged, I preached up and down among the Methodists. But being in principle partly a Calvinist,

and having been accustomed to read Calvinian books, their phrases were become very familiar to me. However, I aimed at doing good ; and when any of the preachers were sick, or had anywhere to go, I readily supplied their place ; and I have reason to believe my labour was not in vain.

The summer being arrived, and Mr. Wesley coming into the country, I met him at Birstal. He received me with that affability and condescension for which he was so remarkable. I heard him preach in several places ; but I cannot say that I could cordially receive the doctrine of perfection. As the conference was drawing near, he advised me to attend it at London. I intimated a desire of spending a year in that place, that I might be fully informed both in the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists. Accordingly I disposed of some small effects which I had, and set out on foot. When I came thither I expected to undergo a close examination, with regard to my principles, experience, and abilities ; and therefore, as I did not in every thing agree with Mr. Wesley, it was a doubt with me whether I should not be rejected. But, to my surprise, I was not asked one question relative to any of these things ; but was appointed for Wales, and was the only travelling preacher of our connection in those parts. This I have sometimes thought was not prudently done, as I was but just come into the connection. However, I set out for Bristol, and so into Wales ; and truly a rough region it was. A preacher at Bristol said to me, " You seem pretty well dressed, and will hold out well enough for a year ; but you must expect nothing to buy any more clothes with when those are worn out." However, I did not regard that ; for I was determined to spend and be spent in doing all the good I could. I therefore began preaching out of doors in the first town I came to, which was Chepstow, and determined to do so in every

town I came to. Thus I went on till after Christmas, and endured a good deal of hardship from hunger and cold; especially in passing those dreadful mountains from Neath to Brecon, which were nearly forty miles over, and have a most dismal aspect in winter. On these I travelled a long way, and saw neither house nor field, hedge nor tree; nor yet any living creature, excepting here and there a poor sheep or two, nor scarcely any visible track to know my way by. This was not pleasing to flesh and blood; but still I determined to go on.

In February there seemed a prospect of much good in a large tract of land called Gower, in Glamorganshire: the inhabitants of it were nearly heathens. I went down into this miserable country in very cold, rainy weather; the people flocked to hear, but we were ill provided with convenient places to preach in. Meantime the rain was excessive, and the cold intense, while we had but little fire; so that I put on my wet clothes several days successively, yet without any inconvenience afterward. Here God blessed my word: I collected several societies, and many were at this time brought to experience the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.

Toward summer, a circumstance seemed to open my way sixty or seventy miles further down to Pembroke-shire: I went thither, and preached at Carmarthen in my way. Afterward I preached at Pembroke, and had multitudes to hear, who behaved in a respectful manner, and generously paid all my expenses; for at this time there was no provision made for missionaries. I preached in several places round Milfordhaven, and had many to hear. Indeed, the prospect was so promising, and the people were so loving, that I was almost tempted to embrace their pressing invitations to stay with them. But I thought that would be a betrayal of my trust; so I returned to my own circuit, promising that I would return again

after the conference was over. When I returned into the old circuit I was seized with a slow fever. I believe it was in some measure occasioned by fatigues. But Providence was kind to me; for though I was in a poor place, where little assistance was to be had, yet by the blessing of God I did without it. Mr. Mather then came from Staffordshire, to help me to put things into some order, and went with me through the rambling circuit; and indeed his advice has been of use to me ever since.

I attended the conference at Leeds, in August, 1762 and was sent back into Pembrokeshire. But though I had three hundred miles to ride, and a new work to begin, I had nothing allowed me either to take me thither, or support me when I got there. But of this I took no care; and through a kind providence I wanted nothing. Another preacher being sent into the old circuit, I had my full scope in the new one. Things turned out beyond my expectation. The Lord blessed the word. I several times visited the societies in Gower, which I joined the year before; for the other preacher had not time. I endured a good deal of hardship and danger in passing and repassing from Gower to Pembrokeshire in winter; there being several dangerous waters to cross. Sometimes a stranger is surrounded by the tides, while he is crossing the sands, and knows nothing of the matter till he finds himself hemmed in on every side. This I once narrowly escaped. I had once a long day's journey, when coming to one of the ferries, which is a mile over, I found the boat was broken. I had nine miles to ride up to Carmarthen, where the bridge was, and nine miles on the other side back again; this added eighteen miles to my journey. I just got over the last ferry in the evening; but which was my road I knew not, and the people could not or would not speak English. But they pointed me up a dark lane, which at length brought me to a wild mountain. It

being quite dark, I knew not which way to go ; for there was no road. At length my mare sunk down in a bog and stuck fast. Here I was at a loss what to do ; for if I left her, it was ten to one if I should find her again. As I knew not which way to go for help, I shouted till I was weary ; but to no purpose. I pitied the poor creature, that after so long and fatiguing a journey, had such a stable at night.

After some time I took hold of the bridle, and pulled her head ; being strong, she made a vigorous struggle, and got her foreparts above ground, and after taking breath made another stout spring, and got entirely free. At this I was not a little glad, but not knowing the ground, I judged it safest to lead her after me. I was weary, cold, and hungry ; and where or when my journey should end I knew not. At length I discovered something like a house, at which I was exceedingly glad ; but my joy was soon over ; for making up to it, I found it an old ruin uninhabited ; so my poor weary companion and I set out again.

At last I saw a man, and prevailed upon him, for sixpence, to show me the way from the common, which was not a quarter of a mile ; for it happened that I had come the direct road. But when I came to the place I aimed at, some time in the night, there was nothing to eat, for either man or horse. I got the poor beast to a farmhouse at some distance. My lodging was but indifferent, yet very agreeable, as I was weary ; and I know not that either I or my beast ailed any thing after we had got into good quarters.

The Lord prospered my undertaking in Pembrokeshire ; so that by Christmas I had eight or nine societies ; and as the people were remarkably loving, my time went on comfortably. It is true I often met with things that were not agreeable ; for I was continually ranging about to beat up fresh ground, and Wales is not the most pleasing part

of the world for a stranger to wander in, especially on the errand which I was upon. But I cared very little about the matter, provided I could see some fruit of my labour. I could rest upon straw, when needful, and be well content.

A little before the conference, I went to Tenby, where the people had held out stoutly for their master, and boasted that no preachers had ever come there, neither should they, but at the price of their lives. I was determined to make the attempt. So a few friends accompanied me, one Sunday morning, from Pembroke. We arrived there by eight o'clock, and after putting up our horses, went to the cross. I gave out the hundredth psalm. The people flocked together amain, and all behaved very well. But they presented a strange figure; some looking through their windows, naked as they had jumped out of bed; some running to the cross with part of their clothes on. After singing and praying without interruption, I gave out my text, and all was quite still. By and by I observed a person, with an air of importance, walking up and down,—who, I soon learned, was the mayor. He would fain have got some of the crowd to pull me down; but all the people stood staring with their mouths and eyes open, as if they would have devoured every word. Finding the town's people took no notice of him, he addressed a company of sailors who stood by themselves; desiring that they would take that fellow down. But the honest tars answered in their own style, "The devil shall take him down for us." He then fetched out the Riot Act, and came into the midst of the crowd to read it; so I ceased speaking until he had concluded. I asked if he had done reading: he said he had. "Well, then," said I, "I will begin again:" so I went on, and concluded in peace. After sermon the constables came to fetch me before the mayor. When I came thither I

found the rector, the curate, and the town clerk there. Mr. Mayor insisted that I had been making a riot. I denied the charge, and desired him to prove it. He said, he would not stand proving the matter with me; but, says he, "Show your authority, or to prison you shall go." I told him, "I have been preaching, and have a license so to do;" which I then produced. This being read, "These justices,"\* said he, "are Methodists, every one of them. Well, but is this all you have to show?" I answered, "Yes." "Then," said he, "you must go to prison. Let his mitimus be made out." For which purpose, pen, ink, and paper were brought. But he was informed there was an Act of Toleration. This was produced; in which it was asserted, that a qualified preacher might preach in either house, field, or other place. This seemed to puzzle Mr. Mayor a little; and he thought it best to dismiss me, on condition that nothing of the kind might be attempted again. I told him I intended to preach again at two o'clock; which I did to well nigh all the town, and had no interruption. I went again that day fortnight, and preached three times, and had very large congregations each time. Presently after I left the country, and must confess I cannot help blaming those who came after me for not following the blow. I was much importuned to stay in the country. However, I tore myself from them, and hastened to the London conference.

From thence I was appointed for Castlebar, in Ireland, and made the best of my way thither. As I sailed up the Bristol Channel, I looked with a wishful eye to Pembrokeshire; and if I could have got on shore, I should have been tempted to stay with the people. But we stretched over for Dublin, where I stayed near a fortnight, and preached with some degree of satisfaction, especially in the Royal Square, belonging to the

\* The justices who signed the license.



barracks, where many of the soldiers attended, and behaved remarkably well, as they do in every place in Ireland. As we seldom preach in country places in Ireland, the people being generally Papists, and often strangers to English, except in the north; so in towns there are always soldiers quartered, and generally some in our society. From Dublin I set out for Castlebar, quite on the other side of the kingdom, preaching at Drumcree, Athlone, Augrim, and Holy Mount by the way, and found the people very hospitable and loving, as they are indeed all over Ireland wherever I have been; so that, if in every thing the Irish excelled as they do in freedom and hospitality, we might give it its ancient name, "a nation of saints." Being arrived at Castlebar, my principal place, I found myself not only in another country, but among another sort of people. Instead of having crowds following me, as in Pembrokeshire, I was shut up in a little dark corner, and had but three small congregations in the circuit; and being entirely surrounded by Papists, there was no probability of enlarging my sphere of action; for they neither understood English, nor durst they come to hear, if they had been ever so desirous. Here I was warmer than wise, in my zeal against the Papists; and had it not been for three troops of dragoons who lay in the town, and were constant hearers, I know not but I should have paid for my rashness. It is certainly beginning at the wrong end with the generality of Roman Catholics, to attack their principles, as this raises prejudice in them immediately, and then all reasoning is at an end. If we mean to do them good, it must be by lovingly introducing the experimental and practical parts of religion. I once preached out of doors, at a place called Drumasnare, at the time of a Papist visitation, and a large concourse of people; here I imprudently entered into the controversies of priestly absolution, purgatory, transubstantiation, praying to saints,

&c. This was ill-timed, and only stirred up rage and indignation. Some of my friends were alarmed, expecting that some mischief would ensue, either openly or secretly: and I was not without apprehension: but I received no harm, and learned to be wiser; for I see we must not provoke those whom we intend to profit.

Finding I could not enlarge my bounds of preaching, I determined to improve my little learning. I did not like to be at the mercy of every pretender, with regard to the original Scriptures, and was much excited to aim at a little more knowledge by reading Mr. Wesley's Address to the Clergy. I saw every reason assigned for their knowing Greek and Hebrew was doubly applicable to me. Indeed, it was my desire from the time of my first engaging in the work of God, to show myself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Very providentially, there was a grammar-school in Castlebar, in which some gentlemen's sons were instructed in the learned languages. The master very freely assisted me; so that I preached night and morning, devoted the forenoon to study, and spent the afternoon in visiting the sick, and reading English; and the evening I spent with my friendly schoolmaster. This has proved very useful to me ever since. Some good was done during my stay here: the numbers in the societies were a little increased, and the congregations much enlarged.

From hence I removed into the Athlone circuit. I still attended to my studies, but had not the same opportunities as before. I here got a sore illness by lying in a damp bed,\* so that my speech and hearing were well nigh taken from me. But this was a necessary visitation, and what my carelessness deserved. However, when I was able,

\* This, I believe, has been the death of several of the preachers; and yet some of the people are not careful in this point.

I preached abroad in most of the towns, and I hope not in vain; though I did not live so near to God as I ought to have done.

My next remove was to Cork. Here a blessed work was begun under that indefatigable servant of God, Mr. Pennington. It did not decrease during my stay, but increased more abundantly. I preached abroad in every part of the city. Prayer-meetings were regularly kept up. I met the class-leaders every Saturday night, and appointed each his work for the ensuing week. Strict discipline was observed. Not a class-leader or steward was permitted to enter the society-meeting without producing his ticket; and the work of the Lord prospered on every side. In this agreeable manner things went on, when Mr. James Morgan came to help me. He was the older preacher, though the care of things was, in some measure, committed to me. I could soon see a party gathering against me, who did not like that strictness of discipline. At length he insisted on a person's being admitted to the love-feasts and society-meetings who would not meet in class: to this I could not consent. I insisted on poor and rich meeting in class, or not to have any privilege of meeting in society. Letters were sent to Mr. Wesley, and his answers were construed in their favour. However, I stood to what I saw was right. They then alleged, her husband would not let her meet in class. To cut off this pretence, I went and asked him if he did hinder her. His answer was, "She is at her own liberty." Then Mr. Morgan was obliged to submit. This, however, caused a shyness between him and me, which cast a damp upon the work. Yet I kept up, at all events, the same discipline as long as I stayed at Cork.

At the beginning of the year 1765 I removed to Limerick, where I found matters in a very different state from what I found them in Cork. The people were very lan-

guid and lifeless, and my own spirit was rather irritated ; so that I did not see much fruit, except at a place called Killfinnen. In July I came over to England, to the Manchester conference. After seeing some of my relations in Yorkshire, I set out for Scotland, preaching at Keighley, Blackburn, Kendal, and Cockermouth, and so on to Dumfries, the first town of note in Scotland. Resting on the Sunday at Dumfries, I preached in the ball-room, the day being rainy, so that I could not preach out of doors. Here I was much importuned to stay ; but my destination was to Glasgow. When I arrived, I entered on a scene which I had never witnessed before. The winter was at hand ; I was in a strange land ; there was no society, no place of entertainment, no place to preach in, no friend to communicate my mind to. I took a private lodging, and gave out that I should preach on the Green, a place of public resort, hard by the city. A table was carried to the place, and at the appointed time I went, and found two bakers' boys and two old women waiting. My very soul sunk within me. I had travelled by land and by water near six hundred miles to this place ; and behold my congregation ! I turned upon my heel to go away. No one can tell but they who have experienced it, what a task it is to stand in the open air, to preach to nobody ! more especially in such a place as Glasgow. However, at length I mounted my table, and began the singing, which I had entirely to myself. A few more kept creeping together, all seemingly very poor people, till at length I had about two hundred hearers. But this was poor encouragement. The night following, I had a more promising congregation ; yet nothing to what I expected. The third night we had heavy rain. This quite cast me down again. O what a day of distress was that ! I had not learned in all states to be content. The enemy assaulted me sorely, so that I was ready to cry out, "It is better

for me to die than to live." But God pitied my weakness: the next day cleared up, and I was never prevented from preaching out of doors for eleven or twelve weeks after.

On the Saturday evening I had a large congregation, and on Sunday morning a larger; but such a one on Sunday evening as I do not remember ever seeing before, excepting once. I mounted my table, but was quite too low. I set a chair upon it, but was quite too low still. I then mounted upon a high wall, and cried aloud, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." All was still as night, so that I conceived great hopes of this opportunity. But when I had done, they made a lane for me to walk through the huge multitude, while they stood staring at me; but no one said, "Where dwellest thou?" I walked home much dejected.

One great obstacle in my way was, a new edition of the "Eleven Letters," ascribed to Mr. Hervey, had just come out, prefaced by a minister in Edinburgh, a man much esteemed in Scotland. These Letters fully answered their design. They carried gall and wormwood wherever they came. So that it was a sufficient reason for every one to keep his distance, because I was connected with Mr. Wesley. I laboured to keep as clear as possible of controversy, dwelling chiefly upon repentance, faith, and the new birth. Indeed, as I then leaned much both to the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and final perseverance, I had no temptation to bring in controversy.

I soon found that persons may easily learn to con over several gospel topics—such as original sin, the offices of Christ, his being the only Saviour, and the like—and yet be haughty, self-sufficient, unbroken-hearted sinners. This I saw, and levelled all my powers against it. I

soon found their pharisaic hearts could not brook it. Hence I drew their resentment upon me, and plenty of lies and calumnies were soon spread abroad.

I continued preaching night and morning, when opportunity offered; and tried much to procure a place to preach in, as the winter was now come on. I believe I was disappointed in ten or twelve different places. I sold my horse; and a preacher who passed through Glasgow to Ireland, having his horse lamed, and little money left, I spared about three guineas to help him on his way. This brought my stock into a small compass; and having every thing to pay for, I was reduced to a short allowance. I paid three shillings per week for my room, fire, and attendance; but I really kept a very poor house. I confess that I never kept so many fast-days, either before or since. But how to keep up my credit was a difficulty; for I was afraid my landlady would think me either poor or covetous. I frequently desired her not to provide any thing for dinner; and a little before noon, I dressed myself, and walked out, till after dinner, and then came home to my hungry room, with a hungry belly. However, she thought I had dined out somewhere; so I saved my credit.

About this time a poor man was executed for the murder of his wife. I attended him several weeks in the prison, and likewise at his execution, which had a circumstance I never saw before: they chopped off his right hand, before his execution, with a great axe, just as a butcher would chop a piece of beef with a cleaver. It is the law of Scotland for every murderer to have his right hand struck off before his execution, and to be stuck upon the pole where he is gibbeted. As I had reason to believe that the Lord had plucked him as a brand from the burning, I published a short account of his case. It is amazing what a cry this raised up against me, to say that God

had mercy on such a sinner! Scurrilous papers were cried up and down the streets against me, filled with lies of all sorts. Nay, so zealous was some poor creature, that he began publishing weekly numbers, and had no better subject than myself. My case was now deplorable: I had famine within doors, and plenty of reproach without. And yet I might have prevented it all; for just at this time there was an elegant place of worship building, called a kirk of relief. Formerly the inhabitants of Scotland had the privilege of choosing their own ministers: of this privilege they are now debarred; and the gift of a living lies in the hands of a patron. But frequently the parishioners unite, build a place of worship, which they term a kirk of relief, and call a minister themselves; leaving the old kirk to the patron and his friend. This was the case in Glasgow: the church was built, but they had not chosen their minister. One of their leading men was one of my greatest intimates. He said, he would engage me three hundred votes, which would be a majority. This was an alluring bait, considering my present circumstances; a place of one hundred and forty pounds per annum, with honour and credit, on one hand, and hunger and contempt on the other. But I thought it would be betraying the trust which was reposed in me. Afterward some of that party desired a meeting with me; but I so satisfied them, that I heard no more from that quarter.

At length I procured a place to preach in, and my hearers furnished it with a pulpit and seats. I saw now a little fruit of my labour: as I had a place to preach in, and a little society, which kept continually increasing; some of whom stand to this day, while others are gone to rest.

I observed above, how kind Providence was in regard to the weather; for though it was a remarkably wet season, yet I never was but once prevented from preaching

abroad till the middle of November, and then only one night: so that it became a kind of proverb among the people, "If it rain all day, it will be fair at night for the *load*," that is, the lad, "to preach on the Green."

One little circumstance I cannot omit. Some time after my arrival at Glasgow, I found myself at a loss what to do in respect to the singing, having but a poor voice for this exercise; and as the people knew nothing of our hymns, I was obliged to sing the Scotch psalms. One of my hearers told me, if I pleased, he would be my precentor, that is, my clerk, to lead the psalms. At this I was glad; so we went on pretty well: but at length he made a demand of thirteen shillings and fourpence for his work, which was just fourpence a time. This did but ill suit my circumstances. However, I paid him his demand, and dismissed him and the Scotch psalms together. I now began to sing our own hymns; the people liking them right well; and in a little time I taught them to sing several of our tunes.

After the society was increased to forty or fifty, some of them began to inquire how I was maintained. They asked me if I had an estate, or some supplies from England. I told them I had neither; but having sold my horse, I had made what little I had go as far as I could. I then explained our custom to them. I told them of the little matter we usually received from our people. The poor souls were much affected, and they very liberally supplied my wants, as also those that came after me. I stayed with them till the middle of April, and then bade them an affectionate farewell; leaving about seventy persons joined together. Though I had many trials in Glasgow, yet I had much opportunity to pursue my study; and the privilege of the college library was of singular advantage to me. But I own I did not live so near to God the latter part of my time as I did in the



beginning. I seldom enlarge my acquaintance, but I find it enlarges my temptations ; so I found cause to cry out, " Lord, pardon my trifling, and want of deep seriousness !"

From hence I went to Edinburgh, and in my way turned aside to Stirling, where I spent three nights. On the Sunday, preaching under the side of an old uninhabited building, some young men got into the inside, and going up stairs, threw off a number of the slates ; but though they fell just by me, I was not hurt, nor any one else. Leaving Stirling, I came to Edinburgh, where the brethren received me gladly. The Octagon was not quite finished, but the congregation was miserably small. Several things had concurred to reduce both the society and congregation, particularly Mr. Hervey's Letters. I had soon the pleasure of seeing the congregation increase, yet not as I could wish ; the place was never above half filled, even on Sunday evenings. I was therefore determined to take a new step.

The Castle-hill being the place of general rendezvous for all sorts of people, after they come out of the churches, about twelve o'clock, I was determined to preach there just at that time. It was disagreeable to stand up bare-headed in the blazing sun ; but this I regarded not. My method was to preach in the Octagon in the morning, on the Castle-hill at noon, in the High-School yard at four o'clock, and in the Octagon at six in the evening. As I generally spake with all my might, this was rather too hard for my constitution. However, by this means I got the Octagon well filled on Sunday evenings, and helped the society a little. In order to establish societies between Edinburgh and Glasgow, I preached in several towns which lie between, such as Burrowstounness, Linlithgow, Falkirk, and Killisyth ; but I fear with little fruit. The Scots are naturally shy, and suspicious of strangers ;

and any thing in religion that appears new, or not agreeing with their established forms, they are exceeding jealous of. Hence class-meeting has the appearance of novelty, and has often been suspected to border upon the Popish auricular confession of sins, though a different thing: hence many in Scotland have been startled at it, and very loath to engage in it.

In October I left my much-esteemed friends at Edinburgh, and removed to Aberdeen. In crossing the Forth, which is seven miles from Leith to Kinghorn, I know not that I was ever nearer being drowned. There were several friends from Edinburgh, and it being a fine calm morning, the regular passage-boat being gone, we hired a small pinnace; but when we were about half way over, such a sudden squall of wind arose, that we were in danger of being upset every minute. But by a merciful providence we got safe over. That evening I arrived at Dundee, and preached three nights, having the place well filled with attentive hearers each night. At Aberdeen I met with a loving people; but as the winter was at hand, I had no opportunity of enlarging my sphere of action. I was therefore determined to apply myself to study, and to live nearer to God than I had done. But a family residing in Aberdeen, which came from Leeds, I immediately contracted an acquaintance with them; and this led me into company, which was a great loss to my soul. After I had spent some time, being fully convinced of my danger, I judged it best to flee; and a ship being ready to sail for Leith, I went on board immediately, taking an abrupt leave. Having scarcely any wind, we had a very tedious passage, as we could make but little way; but I never was with such a ship's company before. Every one on board, both sailors and passengers, came upon deck to prayers, and all kneeled down except the man at the helm. After a slow passage we reached Leith. I has-

tened to Edinburgh, anxious to see my friends; the generality of whom were glad to see me.

As soon as the season would permit, Mr. Olivers being my colleague, we took our station on Castle-hill, hoping for the same success which I had the last summer. But a circumstance happened which hindered our usefulness.

There had been, a few years before, a young man in that college, who met in our society. He appeared to be much alive to God, and was the leader of one of the classes. He had been in England for some time, had got ordained, turned predestinarian, and affected a popular character. He now came to Edinburgh, partly to do us harm, and partly for another purpose. In the latter design he failed; but in the former he was too successful. He would not preach in our place, nor even come to hear us; but preached at our usual times, and by this means drew away much people from us. There was neither matter nor method in his preaching; but he was loud and quaint; so he was much admired. It has fared with him as it has with several others. He first turned Calvinist, and then to nothing. It is plain a man with little parts, and little religion, may do that harm in a short time which men of far greater parts and deeper religion cannot repair in a long period. For though my colleague was a man of good abilities, and did all in his power, as well as myself, yet could we not either prevent or remove the harm which one shallow young man was doing.

During my stay in Edinburgh this season, my time went on but heavily. I saw little good done; the congregations were small; and the society was very cold, and did not increase. It is really very heavy with me when I see God's work at a stand; every thing has but a gloomy aspect; my spirit sinks, and my soul is pained within me.

In September, 1767, I left Edinburgh, and at Dunbar

was seized with an obstruction in my bowels, which seemed to threaten me with a final period to my feeble endeavours. I do not remember ever passing so dreadful a night. Being very providentially in the house of Dr. Hamilton, he took the right method with me, and in a few days I was enabled to set forward, though it was some time before I was free from the effects of that attack. The kind and genteel usage I received both from the doctor and Mrs. Hamilton will not soon be obliterated from my grateful heart.

I preached at Alnwick, Newcastle, Darlington, and Knaresborough, and so on in divers parts of Yorkshire, being glad to see my native country and former acquaintance; and they appeared equally glad to see me. Blessed be God for Christian fellowship, and for Christian friendship! It has a tendency to soothe some of the rugged paths which we meet with in this wilderness, and perhaps may increase our gratitude in the bright realms of eternal day.

Before I dismiss Scotland, I would just take notice, that I have reason to bless God, some good was done by my poor endeavours: some sinners were brought to God; my labours, in the general, were acceptable; and the people gave me many proofs of their friendship, although my entrance among them was unpromising. On the other hand, I see much cause for humility and deep self-abasement. I see that I might have managed my mission abundantly better; I really was neither so holy nor steady as I might have been. I have reason to cry to the Lord, and also to apply to the blood of sprinkling, or I should be an outcast from God, and an heir of eternal misery.

This makes me now, with bended knees,  
Thy daily care implore;  
Confine me, Lord, if't thee please,  
And let me rove no more.

O cause the golden girdle, love,  
To bind my heart to thine ;  
Let me thy little captive prove,  
Become thy spoil divine.

I'll bless my sweet captivity,  
The cord that binds me fast  
To Him who living loved me,  
And died for me at last.

My next remove was to Chester, where a change took place of such consequence to me, that I should be much wanting in gratitude to a kind Providence if I passed it over in silence. I found it was expedient for me to marry, but it appeared a matter of great importance. Only two things in all my life had given me greater concern, namely, my acceptance with God, and my call to preach. What I wanted was, a person of grace, of good understanding, of a good natural disposition, (for my own is violent,) and one who had been well educated. I had contracted an acquaintance with one while in the city of Cork, in whom I had reason to believe the above properties met : she was descended from an eminent French Protestant family, whose grandfather, among many others, had fled from the rage of Louis XIV., and had left his estate behind, only taking what effects he could carry along with him. She was early bereaved of her father, and not long after of her mother. My great objection was, the bringing a person of her delicate constitution and education into such a way of life as she must expect if she became my wife. This I feared would be more than her spirits could bear. Besides, I found a great aversion to bring any more burdens upon the societies ; for she was left an orphan, and her affairs were very ill managed. Yet, believing it to be the will of God, I at length ventured upon this important step ; for which I have abundant reason to bless God, and hope I shall do it for ever.

Here I became acquainted with that amiable pattern to all young females, I mean Miss Gilbert, who was born in the West Indies, and came to England to finish her education, and also to finish her life in the bloom of her days. She kept a daily journal for several years ; and at the age of seventeen, a fever sent her to Abraham's bosom. I visited her in her illness, and was therefore a witness of that sweet resignation and consolation with which she was favoured. At the request of her friends I preached a funeral sermon on the occasion of her death from the affecting words of our Saviour, Luke xxiii, 28: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

The chapel was much crowded, and the congregation much affected. I printed the sermon, which I hope has been a word in season to many a troubled soul.

Before the end of the year, I preached one Sunday morning in the market-place at Salop, and met with no other molestation than a few clods and small stones. I gave notice that I would preach again in the evening, at a place called the Quarry. "We will be ready for you," said the people: and so they were; for when I drew near the place, there was a little army gathered together with clubs. They did not stay till I came to the place, but came on furiously, so that I was soon hemmed in on every side. They seemed a little at a stand when I demanded to know what they wanted. However, they rallied; and though they did not strike me, they kicked me about to some purpose. By degrees they hurried me into the town, up to the door of a house which belonged to a justice of the peace. I thought there might be something providential in this; and took the liberty of going in to desire his protection. The justice was at the coffee-house; but I sent for him. The mob by this time had filled the street, and were roaring like lions. At length the justice

came. He said, "Tell me who have hurt you ; and I will send for a warrant for them ;" and after a little incoherent talk, fairly shoved me out of doors into the midst of the mob. Providence held them from striking, or a very few blows might have ended the business. I likewise kept on my feet ; for if I had once been down, there was no likelihood that I should have risen again. But I was covered with dirt from head to foot. All the filth they could scrape up was thrown, and when I attempted to turn my face on one side, I met it on the other. Which way to go I knew not ; nor indeed could I go any way, but just as my masters drove me. At length I heard some cry out, "For shame, for shame !" this occasioned a quarrel among themselves. Meantime, an honest man opened his door : so I slipped in, and went out by a back way, not much hurt, but dreadfully bedaubed ; so that I really "needed much washing to be touched."

The next year, the society in Dublin being in much confusion, Mr. Wesley desired me to go thither. My affectionate partner was in a very unfit situation for crossing the water. The ship was so crowded that we could obtain no beds ; though they had promised one to us, yet they were taken up before we got on board ; so that it was no small grief to me, to see my dear partner three days and nights without a place where to lay her head. When we got thither, I was in great hopes, for several weeks, that the desired end would be accomplished. But my former antagonist coming to Dublin, who had been the occasion of the confusion, I had all my work to do over again. But he is gone, and I hope to paradise. He occasioned my path to be very rough in Dublin.\*

\* Though it was my misfortune not to agree with Mr. Morgan, yet there were many excellent things in him, such as I wish to imitate ; and my reason for mentioning the above, is to caution myself and others against discord.

Notwithstanding some cross things, I met with many friends, who showed themselves very affectionate, and did every thing in their power to strengthen my hands, to help me in whatever I stood in need of, and to comfort my afflicted wife. The Lord reward them for their kindness in that great day.

While we were there, my wife was delivered of her first child; and not being skilfully treated, she had such a complaint in her breast as was supposed to be a confirmed cancer. The anguish which I saw her daily in was such an affliction to me as I never experienced before. This continued nine months, during which every means was tried that could be devised. At length, partly by a very abstemious diet, partly by taking quicksilver, with the application of boiled hemlock outwardly, through the blessing of God a perfect cure was effected. But before this we removed to Cork, leaving our infant above a hundred miles from us. Though the nurse was a Papist, I have reason to believe that she did her duty to the child.

I found Cork was not as I had left it about four years ago. Then every thing appeared lively: now, all was dull and languid; the prayer-meetings were dropped; discipline was not kept up; and the society was much decayed. I laboured with my might to revive the former flame; but hard it is to regain the ground which is lost.

A little before I left Cork, I was at Bandon one Sunday. It happened there was to be a review, on the Monday, of a regiment of light-horse. While I was preaching in the street, Colonel Walpole and all the officers came, and behaved in a most indecent manner. On my speaking to them, the colonel ordered four trumpeters from the barracks into the middle of the congregation, and commanded them to sound. I gave out the stanza beginning,—

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;”

and when it was sung, began again; so that the poor



trumpeters sounded till they were black in the face, and at last were fairly worn out. This so enraged the colonel, that he even foamed with indignation and blasphemies, and I expected every moment his cane would have been laid upon the poor men's heads. However, at last they all retreated, and got little but shame for their trouble. As the colonel was in liquor, I took the liberty to send him a few lines the next morning, and was told he said, he would not be guilty of such an indiscretion again for twenty pounds. But as I was preaching in the market-house the next night, the officers came again. They stood a while pretty attentive, and then broke out into horrid blasphemies, and were for forcing their way through the people to pull me down. But a large number, chiefly old women, violently engaged them, and gained a complete victory ; so that I was left in peaceable possession of the field, and finished my discourse quietly. The history of this engagement was published in the Freeman's Journal, and sent all over the kingdom.

In July, 1770, I left Cork, and set out for England, taking Dublin in the way. Here I stayed a few weeks, and opened the new chapel in the Gravel walk ; and received our child from the country, where she had been at nurse during our absence at Cork.\* We embarked there in a small cutter for Liverpool, taking our little child with us. After we had got out at sea, there fell a dead calm, so that we could not move forward at all. Our provisions fell short. As for my wife, she, being sick, could eat nothing ; and as for myself, I was not anxious. But I felt for the poor child, only seventeen months old. We had only a little very bad bread, and some stinking water ; but the patient little creature would take a morsel

\* She lived to be married to a kind husband, and bore seven children ; and on the 27th of June, 1801, finished her course in peace, and entered her rest, where I hope to meet her, never to part again.

of the bread, and drink a little of the water, and so lie down again quite content. The vessel was full of the most abandoned clowns, chiefly new recruits; so that their oaths and vulgar obscenity made it a kind of floating hell.

We spent the sabbath at Liverpool, where I preached to a large congregation out of doors. From thence we went to Chester, where we spent two or three comfortable days; and so on to Manchester, the place of my destination for the year. I was glad that I was in England again, where I expected to find genuine religion. I found my diligent and indefatigable predecessor, Mr. Mather, had done all that a laborious man could do to put the circuit into order, excepting that he had left a family in the preachers' house, which neither suited them nor us. Indeed, the house wanted furnishing; but every thing needful was easily granted. I have much reason to acknowledge the kindness of the people there: for I was more expensive to them than I have been to any circuit before or since. Yet every thing was done without grudging. Here my dear partner had a long and dangerous fever; but no assistance was wanting, and all expenses cheerfully paid. They did the same when she lay in; so that I had no weight or care on that head. Here I spent two comfortable years, and had the satisfaction of seeing some fruit of my labour; especially during the latter year.

While I was in the Manchester circuit, I published the discourse upon thoughts, words, and actions, entitled, "A Cry to the Professor's Conscience," &c. I have the comfort to find that this plain tract has been useful; touching the very causes of backsliding from the living God. It pretends to nothing high or elegant, but purely that which is experimental and practical, and, as such, has answered the end which I proposed. To God our Saviour be the praise!

My two years being expired, I left this agreeable circuit with much regret. I came into Birstal circuit, expecting I was going into the land of Goshen. But, O, the amazing difference! There was a general dulness; no discipline, and not one class met well. I scarcely ever came into so dreary a region. The singing of the people indicated the condition they were in; for the few that did sing, sung as if they were half asleep. The congregations were so shrunk at Birstal, that the preaching on a Thursday evening was in the kitchen; and they had plenty of room.

The house was in great want of necessities; for there was not one decent thing in it. It was highly necessary, if possible, to awaken the people. I began at Birstal, and so proceeded; but I soon found myself in hot water. When I wanted things a little more decent in the dwelling-house, the circuit echoed from side to side with my pride and lordliness; and many ill-natured things were said, which made my way very troublesome. One cause of this was, that I thought it my duty to keep close to my study, except when preaching, visiting the sick, &c., or other necessary business called me out. This was construed into pride and stateliness. I think, for the first half year, I never had such a time in my life. However, being sensible I was doing my duty, I determined to continue the same conduct. Rather than alter my plan, I would choose to leave the circuit.

Toward the latter end of the year, great numbers began to have a more favourable opinion of my conduct: they believed that I acted from principle; and God owned my poor labours. However, prejudice continued in many to the last; and when the conference drew on, I found a letter was privately sent against me, in which my pride and niceness were not forgotten, and several surmises added, as if I were a Calvinist, and an enemy to the Church. They

had their desire ; and I had the happiness of being removed to Bradford.

My last year's treatment had left a soreness upon my mind ; but it was soon healed by a kind people. I did not find much life among them at first ; but whatever I said was well received ; my fellow-labourers also joined hand in hand, so that the work of God was greatly revived. This year I was visited with a fever, but found God very present and precious ; so that this also was for my good. The second year we had a blessed outpouring of the Spirit ; believers daily were multiplying, so that during these two years above six hundred souls were added to the societies, and many, nay, most of them continue to this day. This was printed in 1780 : since then many of them are gone to glory. Great numbers were likewise renewed in love, and enabled to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks."

My next remove was to Keighley. This circuit was a mere scarecrow on various accounts ; so that I entered into it with little less than horror. There was a family in the preachers' house, which I was obliged to remove. The house was to furnish, and put into repair ; and I had to beg the money up and down, which is not pleasing work.

The circuit was a large rambling range. I was to be but three or four days at Keighley in six weeks ; and many of the congregations were very small ; all of which were completely disagreeable circumstances. However, I entered upon my work in the best manner I could. I soon got the house put into good repair, and well furnished ; so that my family were comfortably situated. God likewise revived his work in many places, so that between four and five hundred were added to us during the year ; and the greater part were able to give a reason

of the hope that was in them. A little before the conference, having to preach one Sunday evening at Padiham, the house was by far too small for the congregation. It being a fine evening, we chose a convenient place to preach on out of doors. While I was preaching to a large congregation, the minister came at the head of a mob, in his gown and cassock, and dragged me down. As soon as I could, I mounted again, and again was jostled down. I attempted standing up a third time, but to no purpose ; so we adjourned to the preaching-house.

Perceiving the Bible so much neglected, I preached at Heptonstall, from Psalm cxix, 11: "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." The people would take no denial, but insisted on my printing the sermon ; which I have done, entitling it, "The Word of God a hid Treasure." I have reason to hope it has also been useful. That is my great end both in speaking and writing.

In July, 1776, I went to the conference at London, preaching at several places by the way, especially Nottingham, where there is a loving, sensible, judicious people ; and at their request I preached in the market-place to a large, attentive audience, all as peaceable as if they had been in the most solemn temple. Surely God has something to do in this town. From London I rode to Bristol, preaching in several places, with some degree of satisfaction, especially at Bath and Bristol ; so in like manner in going from Bristol I preached at several places, as Gloucester, Worcester, Birmingham, Derby, and Sheffield, meeting with loving people, and liberty in speaking to them. To God our Saviour be all the glory !

Returning to Keighley, I divided the circuit into two very compact rounds, making Colne and the societies which surrounded it into a circuit by itself ; by which means both the circuits are become very agreeable. But

an unhappy affair happening at Colne, put a great damp on the work there.

We had with much difficulty raised a fine large chapel ; and being completed, Mr. Wesley came to open it. Being much crowded, both above and below, and the timber of the galleries not being sufficiently strong, just when Mr. Wesley and I had got into the pulpit, before he began, all of a sudden one of the galleries sunk down, and abundance of people had legs, arms, or thighs broken. The confusion, as may easily be imagined, was very great ; and the cries of such as were maimed, and such as were frightened, were truly piercing. Many false reports were spread concerning this awful adventure. Some said the whole chapel was in danger, and therefore durst not come into it. By one means or other, the work got a dreadful stun, which I fear it will not recover very soon.

After spending my second year at Keighley, among a simple and loving people, in 1777 I set out for the conference at Bristol, taking Manchester in my way ; and there I preached in an open place near the infirmary, to a large and well-behaved congregation. From thence I preached at Macclesfield, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Gloucester, &c. ; I hope not in vain : and after the conference I removed to Wednesbury in Staffordshire, where I had the less hopes of doing good, because my predecessor had done all that I could do in any respect. I found the house bare of furniture, the circuit poor, and trade bad ; so that it was hard to put things in order. However, I set about it, and got my design completed in that respect. But still, the great business gave me much uneasiness ; the societies were dull, and the congregations miserably small. Calvinism, Antinomianism, and downright Ranterism, had so laid waste this country, that there were small hopes of doing much good. My very soul sunk within me, so that at times it seemed as if I must faint. I cannot

tell how they get their time over, who can drag on and see no fruit. Were that my case, I should be ready to conclude, that I was out of my place. To me this was a bitter and a trying season, going round and round, and seeing no good effect. However, when the new year came in, God revived his work. The preaching abroad, in the latter end of the summer, had excited many to come and hear. By hearing they were convinced, and many were brought to the knowledge of the love of God. I think near two hundred were this year added to the societies.

Birmingham, which is a principal place in this circuit, had for many years been very turbulent, by reason of the mobbing rabble; but at length an honest justice let them know their place, so that we have peace now. I preached one Lord's-day evening in a large square, called the new market. I had much enlargement, and the multitude was still as night. I spoke from Luke xvi, 8: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." I have reason to hope this discourse has not been printed in vain; for it has been much read in various places. I have reason to think that our preaching out of doors in Birmingham was a happy means of increasing the blessed work: for before that time we were cased up in an old shabby building, in an obscure, dirty back street; but soon after our going out of doors, a large new chapel was built; and since that two more.

After the next conference, in 1778, I was appointed for the Birstal circuit, into which I came with fear and trembling, remembering the days of old. As my worthy predecessor, Mr. Pawson, had been much blessed among the people, and was much esteemed by them, it made my entrance the more difficult. He had much improved the dwelling-house, and had regulated several things, so that all who come after him will reap the fruit of his labour. I endeavoured to complete what he had left undone.

There had been a blessed work in Birstal, where many were suddenly brought in; but the fire had not spread much further. And as these were young converts, and not established, I feared we should have a sad falling away. But this was not the case: some few dropped off, and but a few. On the other hand, the awakening spread into most of the societies; so that I scarcely ever saw so extensive a work. We joined above seven hundred this year, and the greater part alive to God. I never knew so simple means made use of, in the hand of a gracious God, to bring sinners to himself. Prayer-meetings were singularly useful, and so was the preaching; but thunder and lightning, dreams and visions, singing and praying, were all made use of for the awakening of sinners. I returned again into that circuit, and what Providence has yet to do in me or by me, I cannot tell. But here I am, a monument of amazing mercy, willing to lie in his blessed hands as clay in the hands of the great Potter, so that I may in all things be a vessel meet for my Lord's service; wishing only to finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received from him.

This year being attended with much unction of the Spirit in the circuit, by bringing many poor wanderers to the fold of the true Shepherd, I had some sharp trials to grapple with, in some private affairs: among other things, I had a fine boy seized with fits in a violent manner; for one whole day he had them almost without intermission; for no sooner did he recover from one, than another seized him. I was several times fetched home, as it was supposed that he was dying. One time, being fetched home near twenty miles off, on the same mournful occasion, and riding sharply upon a high causeway, and a hollow road on my left hand, my horse took fright at something, reared upon his hind feet, turned round, and fell down into the hollow way upon me. The man who was with me, attempting to



dismount his horse too hastily, his foot hung fast in the stirrup, and he could not come to my assistance ; only his horse was quiet and stood still, or his case might have been very bad. In the mean time my horse lay upon me as if he were dead : and it was well he did so ; for had he attempted to rise or struggle with his fore feet, he would have struck me even in the face, and might have killed me on the spot. I thought one of my legs was broken in pieces, as it lay under the horse upon a stone. However, with hard struggling I got myself from under ; and after the numbness was gone, I found I could stand, though much crushed. One circumstance upon another began to impress my mind with uneasy sensations ; but, riding in a lonely place, I saw a strip of clean paper lying on the ground : curiosity led me to alight and see what it was. The words written were verbatim thus : “ The love of Christ is a correcting love ; whom he loveth he chasteneth ; and correcteth every son whom he receiveth.” This was really a word in season, a sweet reviving cordial ; and I know not that my mind has ever been so harassed since. By what hand the bit of paper was dropped, I cannot tell ; but the hand of a kind Providence directed it to me.

Before I close this part of the narration, there are two things which in gratitude to my God I cannot omit.

I mentioned before, how desirous I was of improving myself in the original languages. After I had made some progress in Greek, having gone through the Greek Testament, and two or three of the classic authors in that language, I wanted to get an acquaintance with the Hebrew. I procured several books ; but they did not answer my purpose. While I was in Edinburgh, I employed a Jew, a professed teacher of Hebrew, at an extravagant rate : but I soon found he was utterly insufficient for what he undertook, as he knew nothing of the

grammar ; so that his teaching was a mere imposition. I began to despair of attaining it, when Robinson's Key came in my way, by which I readily went through the Psalms. I procured his *Manipulus Linguae Sanctæ* ; and by the assistance of that, with Buxtorf's Lexicon, I can read my Hebrew Bible with pleasure. I have a particular method of spending my time, which I have found of the utmost importance.

My method of spending my time is this. The time before breakfast is wholly devoted to my Hebrew Bible, comparing the original text with the Latin and English translations. I did, for some time, carry about with me the Septuagint translation, that is, the Hebrew Bible translated into Greek by seventy Jews ; but finding it to be so wide of the Hebrew, I have laid it aside, only consulting it occasionally.

After breakfast I write, or read in some Latin author, till it is time to take horse. If I do not ride, I visit the sick, and others, till dinner. After dinner I generally read divinity, history, geography, or philosophy, till five ; and then spend some time in my Greek Testament, and considering the subject I shall preach from that evening. After preaching, and the society-meeting, I spend the little remains of the evening in friendly conversation with such as happen to be present, till I retire. I then note down what has occurred in the day, and commit myself into the hands of my gracious God. This is my general manner of spending my time ; but I find a good deal of difficulty in keeping to it. Sometimes I want convenient retirement ; so that I am obliged to pursue my study in the midst of children, noise, and confusion.\*

\* The sole reason for inserting this, is a wish to stir up some of my brethren to redeem their time ; and what may seem a reflection in the preceding narrative, is but applicable to very few. My brethren in the gospel I esteem above all men.

There is a gross error which some of our people labour under; namely, that we are not to premeditate on what we are to preach; that God is to assist us in an extraordinary manner; and that all study and meditation are taking the matter out of his hands. Such a practice serves to patronize a sluggish, lounging temper; and is evidently productive of confusion, rhapsody, and nonsense. Indeed, if any one comes to me for advice, or in distress of mind, I directly lay aside every thing else, and apply myself wholly to the case; but otherwise I keep to my regular plan. I wonder that every preacher does not keep something of a daily journal; more especially of what passes in his own mind. This I have found so useful, that I repent I did not adopt it sooner.

The other circumstance which I cannot omit, is, my commencing what is called an Arminian. I observed, above, that my first religious acquaintance were Calvinists, some of whom had been joined among the Methodists: from these I received such accounts as gave me a prejudice against them. I likewise read little else than Calvinian authors, and was much delighted with what is called "moderate Calvinism." Indeed, there is one branch of Calvinism, I mean "reprobation," what Mr. Fletcher calls its "left leg," which I never could cordially embrace. But still I hung in suspense till I read Mr. Wesley's "Predestination calmly Considered." Then I bade a final adieu to the damning of infants, and the consigning of unborn souls to hell. His "Appeals" likewise (which I heartily wish every person, not entirely drunk with prejudice, to read over and over) were of great service to me. I was now a kind of Baxterian, or rather Miltonian; for I saw first the scheme in *Paradise Lost*. And I still confess much may be said for that scheme of thinking, as it solves many difficulties, and tends to moderation; but still I held fast by Calvinian imputed righteousness, and Calvinian final

perseverance. I call them "Calvinian," to distinguish them from Scriptural imputed righteousness, and Scriptural perseverance. In this mongrel state I was, when Mr. Wesley published his "Abridgment of John Goodwin on Imputed Righteousness." I had never so much as heard of his name; and no wonder, for he was a condemned heretic among the Calvinists. This book I read; but I did not like it, as he was so unmerciful to my favourite scheme, so warmly set forth in my favourite author, Mr. Hervey. However, after some time I determined to give him a fair reading; and that I might be thoroughly satisfied, I read him over twice. I saw the truth as clear as the shining sun. I saw Calvinian imputed righteousness is downright Antinomianism. I still hung in suspense about final perseverance, and knew not which side of the question to take. The authors which I had been accustomed to read were all warm advocates for it, and brought such texts, with their comments upon them, as seemed unanswerable. But Goodwin's "Redemption Redeemed" fell into my hands; toward the latter end of which he considers the scriptures alleged, and the arguments brought, for final perseverance, and answers them in so masterly a manner, as has not left the shadow of a doubt upon my mind. So that I am firmly persuaded a man may make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

But though my own principles are fixed, I wish heartily that we could agree to grant each other liberty of conscience. There is no forcing of the understanding; the attempting of it has frequently lighted up the dreadful flames of persecution. I must confess, the ungenteel, unchristian, scurrilous treatment which Mr. Wesley has received from several of the opposite party, has given me a very unfavourable impression both of them and the cause in which they are embarked. It is most certain, that the giving of hard names, with a deal of low buf-

foenery, will never advance the cause of the meek and lowly Jesus.

My next remove was to the York circuit, in which I met with many kind friends. They had just finished a neat, genteel house, for the preacher's residence, and made every thing very convenient. A small spot of ground before the front I turned into a neat little garden. I found the people very loving, and the congregations increased; and I and my fellow-labourers were received with great affection. I preached abroad in several parts of the city, especially in the Thursday market, being very willing to stir up the inhabitants to seek salvation.

Preaching, one Lord's day, in the Thursday market, the lord mayor sent his officers to forbid me, and to insist upon my coming down. I let the speaker deliver his message, and then resumed my discourse, taking no notice of what was said to me, as indeed it meant nothing saying any thing to the officers, seeing they only did as they were commanded. I happened to be speaking from a text that was somewhat singular: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also," Acts xvii, 6. Our brethren thought it highly advisable to publish the sermon, as we expected to hear further from the magistrates. Accordingly I wrote it down while every thing was fresh upon my mind; and I have reason to hope it was useful in York, as numbers read it who perhaps never heard one of us preach in their lives; nor did I hear any more from the lord mayor.

The most disagreeable thing in this circuit is, the smallness of the congregations: hence one is almost buried alive. There is but little trade in any part of the circuit; and where there is little trade, there is seldom much increase in religion. The people are chiefly farmers, and in general in a state of great bondage to their wealthy landlords, to whom they are a kind of vassals; and in

general dread them more abundantly than they do their Maker : and though some of them have got money upon their farms, with a deal of care and hard labour, yet there are others who are very hard set to live ; and certainly they are some of the greatest slaves in England, for they labour hard, and live very poorly. In short, they seem to have little comfort here, nor any bright prospect of faring much better hereafter. However, there are a few who labour to keep their garments undefiled, and who are very loving to such as are sent to preach the gospel among them. I felt much union of spirit with them, and hope to meet them in the region of eternal bliss.

My two years being expired in this quiet circuit, I set out for the conference at London, and took the road through Lincolnshire, and was truly pained to see how religion laid in ruins all the way to London. I preached in several places ; but the congregations were pitifully small, and very languid and dull. From Huntingdon I crossed the country to Bedford, and preached there, and the next day at Luton ; where I found my worthy friend Mr. Cole had built a small chapel, and it was well filled. During the conference week I preached in most of our chapels in London, and found much liberty, especially at West-street, Seven-dials ; and was glad to find the people in London love plain, simple preaching. I think the preachers, by labouring more for accuracy than life, miss the mark in London ; and perhaps that may account for the deadness which hath been complained of in that city for many years. I find the people of London want and love something which will affect their hearts, and stir up their souls.

In my return I took Luton, Bedford, and Leicester in my way, and had a comfortable time at Nottingham. The people seemed to drink in the word as the parched ground drinks in the vernal showers. O, it is a pleasing task to

preach to a judicious, lively people ! Such the people at Nottingham seem to be. I do not wonder that their chapel is too small, and that they are engaged in building one larger, and in a more convenient part of the town, which I hope will prove a blessing to many that are yet unborn.

My destination this year was Sheffield, a place which will be dear to me while I can remember any thing. In general I found things at a low ebb, and did not wonder much at that. However, I and my fellow-labourers set about our work with great unanimity of spirit ; and our different gifts seemed happily blended, and suited to the people. The large chapel was well filled, and though several detached parties set up, yet it seemed to affect us very little. It is true, there were several unpromising places in the circuit ; and some towns, especially Doncaster, a pretty, genteel town, but very destitute of religion. Since that time there is a blessed change in Doncaster for the better ; insomuch that it is become the head of a circuit. Indeed, the chapel is in a very disagreeable part of the town, and the little society chiefly very poor. In winter evenings they are pestered with the rabble, and in summer time few will come near. I tried to preach out of doors, but I fear it was to little purpose. However, Sheffield made an ample amends ; and as we were a whole week in the town at a time, we had time upon our hands. We were three preachers, and managed with two horses ; a scheme which is highly advantageous wherever it takes place. Add to this, there is a cordial love to their ministers : they really “ know them that labour among them.” They are loving and friendly, and whatever is wanted they are ever ready to supply, and take a delight in making their preachers happy. They do not look upon the cause in which they are embarked as something by the by, which they are at liberty to let sink or swim ; but they look upon it as the cause of God,

the business for which Christ Jesus laid down his life ; and as such they consider it as their duty, yea, their privilege and honour, to support and propagate it with all their might.

There is also a number of serious, sensible leaders, who interest themselves in carrying on the work of God ; and though there are nearly thirty of them, yet for the two years which I had the happiness of being among them, we always met and parted in much peace.

Our quarterly-meetings were conducted with great harmony and concord ; every one took such care that we never ran short of money, so that there were no complaints, nor was there cause. As they felt and cared for their ministers, so they considered every thing in the way of housekeeping was become dear, and with great cheerfulness augmented the assistance to support the preachers and their families. For my own part, I have much reason to acknowledge the many favours, both public and private, which I and my family received from that affectionate and liberal-hearted people. May the Lord abundantly reward them ! Indeed, I believe he does : many he blesses in their basket and in their store in an ample manner.

In Rotherham, in like manner, there are a few particularly dear to me, whose friendship and happy fellowship gratitude will ever oblige me to acknowledge in the most affectionate manner.

I have reason to bless God that I ever came into this circuit ; his presence I have often experienced ; and, glory be to his adorable name ! I did not labour in vain ; good was done ; sinners were convinced and converted ; believers were strengthened and edified, and backsliders healed. Finding the glorious Godhead of Christ struck at by a number of men united, who called themselves “ the Unitarian Club,” I preached and printed a sermon to prove



that He who died for us is, in the most unlimited sense, “over all, God blessed for ever.”

Application would have readily been made for my continuance another year, but as I knew it would be in vain, I desired them not to do it. And here, friendly reader, with the conclusion of my labours among this friendly and much-esteemed people, I will conclude this part of my narrative. May they, may you and I, happily meet in the kingdom of our Immanuel! Amen.

---

## PART 'II.

MANY years are now elapsed since I published a narrative of the most remarkable occurrences which had befallen me for the space of forty years; nor had I any intention of troubling the world any further with my history, which may appear to have very little of an interesting nature in it, except to myself. But the part already published having been out of print for some years, and several wishing for another impression, I have determined to reprint it; and several changes having taken place in the body of people with which I am connected, and some in which I am a little implicated, I think it may be of use to add, what I call “a second part,” in which I may throw a little light upon some recent occurrences. Perhaps some may think, that my attaching other things to my own narrative may be a deviation from the rules of strict biography. But I have observed, in the reading of the lives of others, and in particular, that of Mr. Baxter, that a variety of other circumstances are interwoven therein. I may venture to follow so good an example. The death of Mr. Wesley, the agitations which we have had respecting the Lord's supper, service in what are called church

hours, and the attempts which have been made to rend and divide us, have happened in the space of a few years, and have troubled the body in no small degree.

I removed from Sheffield to Halifax in the year 1784 ; and having had much comfort in that circuit in years past, I removed with some degree of satisfaction. But there had been a falling away ; some had even grown cold and indifferent ; and some, I doubt, were quite fallen asleep. I found cause of mourning, that many had departed from the faith, and the greater part had left their first love. Indeed, it is no new thing. Whoever will read the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, and the Hebrews, will find the same complaints ; and looking into the Epistles to the seven Asiatic churches, we see but two, that of Smyrna, and that of Philadelphia, which were free from blame, even in the apostolic age ; and what a dreadful falling away soon after ensued, all that have any acquaintance with church history cannot be ignorant of ; all of which shows the propriety of that solemn admonition, “ What I say to one, I say to all, Watch.”

We were three preachers in the circuit ; but one, Mr. Valton, out of three was laid up almost the whole year. I think he did not go through the circuit once. He was a gracious man, and an exceedingly useful preacher ; so that want of his labour was a great check to our success. However, some souls were gathered in, and the work a little revived.

My next remove was to Leeds ; which proved a trial to my patience, especially the first year. I always find where the reins of discipline are slackened, it sinks the state of vital religion very much. I found it so here : and the mischief is, there is in people an unwillingness to be brought into order, when they have been accustomed to live without it ; and the minister who attempts the reform must bear his cross. There were several local preachers

who ought not to have been private members, whose conduct was even immoral. I am at a loss to know what can induce men to preach, who are destitute of the life and power of godliness. However, there were several very excellent characters among the local preachers; several of whom are gone to their everlasting reward. But very great care should be taken, that men of unblemished characters alone be employed in the ministry of the word. The same care should be taken respecting the class-leaders; and then there is some hope that they will labour to make the people like themselves. Indeed, it is natural for the people to take the tinge of their guides. There were many excellent persons in the society at Leeds. I was well aware that many of our people seldom went to church, and received the Lord's supper nowhere. Truly they had lost sight of it; there might have been no such command in the New Testament, as, "Do this in remembrance of me." Knowing this, I exhorted the people to attend the Lord's supper, and happened to say, the time would come when the Methodists would enjoy that ordinance among themselves, and in the mean time I wished them to receive it in the best manner they could. The very intimation of any such thing was as bad as high treason, and I soon found myself in hot water. However, in the midst of trouble some good was done; and the second year was more peaceable, and consequently more comfortable.

In the month of November I was seized with a rheumatic fever, the severest affliction of body I ever remember labouring under. The pain was such, that I could compare it to nothing, but as if my limbs were tearing or twisting off. It brought me very low, and was the only time that I can remember when any one had to sit up in the night with me; and this laborious task my dear partner chiefly undertook. In the beginning I felt much com-

fort and confidence in God ; but toward the latter end my head was considerably affected, and the slumbers I had were disturbed with wild and incoherent roavings ; and very weak indeed I was. However, the Lord raised me up again ; but the effects of that disorder, I suppose, I shall feel till the dust shall return to the dust again. It renders walking particularly fatiguing ; for after I have walked a few hundred yards, the pains in my knees, ankles, &c., are so acute, that I am soon in a bath of sweat, and am obliged to sit down upon any thing that I can find in my way. I have considerable difficulty in getting on horseback ; so that I am not well qualified for travelling, either on horseback or on foot. I was obliged this year to submit to spectacles. I had perceived my sight gradually to fail for some time. This I attributed to the close attention which I had paid some years before to the compiling “the Concordance” which I published ; and being rather straitened for time, I did much of the work by candle-light, without using a screen,—a circumstance which I advise every one to attend to, who either reads or writes much by candle-light. I once thought, my sight would last to the end of my days ; but by making too free with it, I am mistaken.

My next remove was to Manchester. I had laboured many years ago in this circuit with much satisfaction, and left it with regret. As there will be a thorn in every rose, so I found it here. A few who affected to be righteous overmuch, that is, who set up themselves as judges of other people, gave us some trouble ; so that I was under the disagreeable necessity of putting two of those troublesome men out of the society. However, we had a considerable ingathering of precious souls, especially in Saddleworth ; so that it was a pleasure to me to go into these rough valleys. But in every stage of life we have need to watch : so I found it in this circuit ; and not being

always on my guard, I sometimes gave way to trifling circumstances, which brought my mind low. Satan will make a corrupt heart subservient to his devices, without due care. No matter how trivial a thing may be, if it stand between God and the soul, it does much mischief. May I ever learn wisdom from slips and blunders ; for I have many of these to bemoan. It is well there is a never-failing Intercessor, an Advocate with the Father, who can pity poor mortal worms, whose grace is sufficient to heal backsliding souls, and to help in time of need. I may say, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord ; for in thy sight I can neither justify myself nor another."

My next remove was to Hull : hoping that bathing in salt water might be of some use to my poor disordered son. Whether it was owing to the low damp country, and scarcity of fire, or some other cause, I knew not ; but my rheumatic complaints were troublesome, so that I could but walk very poorly. Indeed, in some places the roads were so bad, that it was impossible to go any quicker than a slow foot-pace, and then I was much pinched with the cold. In Hull the congregations were large, and pretty well in Beverley ; but in other places they were small and dull enough.

In the beginning of my second year, soon after the conference, I had two providential escapes ; and I should be very ungrateful to my gracious Preserver were I to forget them. In my return from the Bristol conference, I took Sheffield in my way, and so through Rotherham, and Doncaster, to Thorne ; and there hoping to save time and expense, I took a small boat, expecting to get down to Hull in one tide. But the boatman trifled away so much time in the morning, that the tide was spent when we got to Brough, twelve miles short of Hull. My youngest daughter was with me ; and in this place, when the tide is out, it leaves a very large space covered with mud and

slime, so that it is very difficult to get on shore, especially for women : and as we had to wait here more than six hours, I was sure it would be improper for my daughter to remain on the water all that time. I having my boots on, with the help of a staff, got on shore ; but it being so slippery, I durst not take my daughter on my back lest I should fall and throw her in the mud ; the boatman being old, and rather feeble, I durst not trust her with him, for the same reason. However, I saw a stout man, who had been catching eels, without shoes or stockings, and one that was accustomed to walk on those slippery places, and got him for sixpence to fetch my daughter, and he brought her safe on shore : thus far we were safe, and I was thankful. But still we were a little at a loss how to dispose of ourselves, for six or seven hours, till the tide should turn. There was but one poor little alehouse in the place ; and that was crowded with men drinking, and far from being agreeable. However, we passed the time as well as we could, till eight in the evening, when we weighed anchor and embarked again. Heavy rain came on, and it was very dark ; but we had no shelter, being in a little open boat. The wind meeting the tide, made our little bark toss to some purpose. A young woman in the boat screamed out amain : my dear girl said not a word, though she apprehended we should be upset ; but commended herself into the hands of our gracious God. Perhaps there was not much danger, but we thought there was, and at any rate our situation was very unpleasant ; the waves tossed, the night was dark, and the rain was heavy. About midnight we arrived in the port of Hull ; and here, having to climb over the ships in the dark, I was very near falling into the hold of a large empty ship. I felt a touch of impatience at the man for bringing us into such a disagreeable situation. However, after some delays, we got safe to our habitation. Thus will

the storms of life end ; and may we reach the haven of eternal repose !

“ ’Tis there I’ll bathe my weary soul  
In seas of endless rest ;  
And not a wave of trouble roll  
Across my peaceful breast.”

The next kind interposition of Providence was as follows :—A part of the circuit lies in Holderness ; a large tract of low, marshy country : and in order to drain it, there are large canals cut in different directions. They are so large that boats go on them, by which they carry the people’s manure from place to place ; and over these canals are bridges built of brick, in convenient places, for horses and carriages to pass over. Coming to one of these bridges, which was newly built, a man standing by the side of the canal said, “ Sir, I am doubtful if that bridge is not giving way. I think it is hardly safe for you to attempt passing over.” As I saw no danger, I feared none ; and thinking I should have a long way to go round to another bridge, and perceiving carriages had gone over, I went on ; but before I got over, the whole fabrick came down, as if it had been cut off at each end. It sunk under the horse ; he dropped down perpendicularly ; and I very gravely sat on his back. It had been dry weather for a long time, so that the water in the canal was low ; which was very providential, or very likely both the horse and myself would have been lost. Another circumstance was very favourable ; that is, a considerable number of men were at work in the field ; and hearing the crash of the bridge, they ran, and gave all assistance to help the horse out, or the water might have risen by the current being stopped, so that the poor animal might have been drowned before I could have got assistance, as the place was at a considerable distance from any houses. There was another circumstance which I

considered as providential ; and that was, had the horse taken a step or two more before the fall of the bridge, his fore feet would have been on firm ground, and the bridge giving way behind, he would very likely have tumbled backward, and fallen on me ; and if so, it is very easy to judge what would have been my situation. But my gracious God gives his angels charge over his followers ; for they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. In these circumstances, I am persuaded of their kind interposition. It is true, God does not need their interference ; nor does he need men to preach, seeing he can convert souls without them ; nor does he need men to till the ground, seeing he can cause the earth to yield her fruit without the tiller's toil ; but he is pleased to use his creatures as instruments, that thereby they may be stimulated to diligence, and excited to love one another, seeing that all are made subservient to the good of the whole : insomuch that the different members of society are all useful, even as the different members of the body are to the whole. In the most opulent city, the humble chimney-sweeper is as useful in his place as the chief magistrate.

In March 2d, 1791, that great man of God, the Rev. John Wesley, paid the debt of nature. He ended his long, laborious, and useful life comfortably. That I had a crowded audience, far more than the large chapel in Hull could contain, was not to be wondered at ; as I suppose that was the case in every place where a funeral sermon was preached on the occasion, which I apprehend was all over the three kingdoms. It was thought great changes would take place after his death, and various things were prophesied by people of warm imaginations. We had some little stir ; I believe chiefly through a printed circular which was issued from Hull. I suppose it originated from some persons who professed to be warm



advocates for the Church, and persuaded others to sign it. This document was sent to every circuit in the kingdom, and called an echo back from many circuits ; so that it was thought there would be a division at the conference ; and perhaps steps by some were prepared for such an event. A scheme had been previously taken to divide the kingdom into districts ; and accordingly the preachers in the several districts met, and did what they could to prepare matters for the conference, which assembled at Manchester. We had a large assembly, as might be expected ; and many things were said *pro* and *con*, and in much better humour than might have been hoped. In the issue, it was determined by the majority to take up the plan just as Mr. Wesley had left it. This I saw would be a bone of contention the ensuing year, as it left our affairs in a very unsettled state. Vast numbers of people, besides preachers, attended at this conference, that is, came to Manchester, all anxious to hear what the result would be. I was certain that such a decision would leave us worse than it found us ; and so it proved. Indeed, we had a troublesome year. Printed letters were issued out on all sides, and all companies were taken up with debates upon old and new plans, to the injury of brotherly love.

My appointment was for Liverpool, where there were two warm parties. Not knowing what sort of provision there was for a family, or what kind of reception I should meet with, I judged it prudent to go alone, and leave my family at Manchester, where my eldest [daughter] was married, and had been settled some time.

When I came to Liverpool, things had but a discouraging aspect. I found the dwelling-house shut up, and had been so for some time ; every thing looked very cold and naked, all just as it had been left ; no steward nor any other person came near me. It was Saturday when I arrived. I preached that evening. On the Lord's day

a friend invited me to dine ; and I preached morning and evening, with some degree of liberty.

On the Monday morning the steward called upon me, and appeared in a friendly mood. He told me, that if I would let things go on in the old plan, every thing I wished for I should have ; but if I made any alteration, I must shift for myself ; or to that effect.

After some days I received an address from ten leaders, vehemently requesting that there might be no service in church hours, nor sacrament. About the same time I received another address from thirteen leaders, (and, as I remember, three names besides, who stood neuter,) who begged, in the name of their people, that I would let them have service in church hours : they did not want to compel the rest of their brethren, but only plead for themselves, that they might have liberty of conscience, and an opportunity of bringing their families to the public worship at a convenient time. What made the matter more in their favour was, a new chapel was built rather on one side of the town ; and some said, they subscribed on purpose to the building, that it might be opened at that time of the day. On the present plan, it was of very little use, except on a Sunday evening ; for on a Sunday morning very few indeed attended. We were two preachers in town, and had nothing to do, from the preaching at seven in the morning till six in the evening ; and our people were running hither and thither, hearing what was far from profiting them, or else staying at home ; and two chapels were shut up during the best part of the day. Had not a large body of people requested it, however reasonable the thing itself might be, I should have let things go on in the same channel, for the sake of such as desired it. In a few days after, came six of the leading men of the Church party, and wished to converse with me on the subject. We had a long conversation. I used every

argument that appeared to be Scriptural and reasonable ; but it made no impression : all they could say was, that it was the old plan, and God had blessed it ; and Mr. Wesley had said, "If the Methodists leave the Church, God would leave them." I had another difficulty in my way. We had a new dwelling-house covered in, but it wanted finishing, and we were paying rent for another house in the mean time. The present steward would take no active part in it, unless I would promise that no alteration should be made ; and no one could interfere in the business but the man in office, so that we were at a stand. I knew that things ought not to continue thus ; therefore in a full vestry-meeting, I was determined to have the matter settled, and urged the steward to set the business forward, that we might not be paying rent for a house, and let our own run to ruin. After much reasoning, and even entreating, he utterly refused to act ; so I was obliged to appoint other stewards, to see our business carried on.

I was now urged to open the new chapel in the forenoon : and having waited several months, and used every argument, in which I believed both Scripture and reason would support me, to reconcile the contending party, but to no purpose ; and perceiving that two-thirds of the society were grieved and hurt, I, on the 16th day of November, 1791, began the service at half past ten in the forenoon. The ten leaders immediately withdrew, and took as many of their people with them as they could prevail upon. Several persons were set at liberty in that chapel in the forenoon service, and the society rapidly increased from that time. However, it was a time of much trouble to my mind. But if ever I did any thing with a single eye in my life, it was my conduct at this time ; for I am sure I had neither ease, honour, nor profit in view. As the body was convulsed, and as those

throughout the nation who wanted the service at a convenient hour, and to have the Lord's supper according to our Saviour's institution, were quite willing that their brethren should enjoy their liberty in going to church, &c.; as every other circumstance belonging to Methodism, both in doctrine and discipline, was to stand as it had done, nothing being altered, changed, or dropped; it seemed unreasonable, that any part of the connection should put a yoke upon the necks of their brethren, which they themselves were unwilling to bear. I published a pamphlet as a vindication of our conduct, and showed some weighty reasons for our proceedings. I hope it was useful.

As our brethren had lived so long without the communion, they wished for that ordinance, knowing it to be the command of Christ; and they solicited me to administer it to them. I believed that I had a perfect right to do so. Moreover, when I was appointed by the conference for Liverpool, I understood there were two parties; I therefore desired the conference to give me my orders, so that I might know what it was expected that I should do. The answer was, that I might just act as I thought proper, when I came thither, as I should be then capable of judging when I saw how the circumstances stood. Hence I judged that I had full power to act according to the best of my judgment; and that was my rule.

But there was one difficulty in my way, respecting the Lord's supper: though I had been a preacher thirty years, or more, yet I had never received any formal ordination by the imposition of hands; and although I believed it lawful, yet I did not think it expedient, to celebrate the Lord's supper without some formality of that kind. I own I had some hesitation in my mind concerning the propriety of submitting to a human form, after being owned so many years by the chief Shepherd without it. I am

certain that such a ceremony is not essential to a gospel ministry ; and likewise the solemn admission into the awful office by a number of old, well-tried, and aged ministers of the New Testament, appears to me a real Scriptural ordination. However, I submitted to a formal ordination. But there was another obstacle in the way. Our people have been exhorted to go to the Lord's supper ; but numbers are very ignorant of the nature and design of the solemn ordinance. I therefore considered what I could recommend to them upon the subject. I could not recollect one single tract that was sufficiently explicit, clear, and concise. I therefore wrote one upon 1 Corinthians xi, 28, delivered it in the chapel, and afterward published it. I have the confidence to think, I have seen nothing upon the subject that states that important ordinance in a clearer light.

The time of our district-meeting drew on, where I attended. My conduct at Liverpool was examined and approved ; and, further, it was agreed that I should administer the Lord's supper at Liverpool. Accordingly I gave public notice that I should join with them in breaking bread in remembrance of Him who died for us. It was a blessed season in the general ; and two poor captives were set at liberty, who desired thanks to be given in the evening to their gracious Deliverer.

The affair at Liverpool made so much noise, that some of the preachers in the district would have a meeting upon the spot. I made no objection, though I deemed the meeting very needless. Six preachers came, three from our district, and three from other districts. There were several things that I might have objected to, but I really wanted peace, consistent with a good conscience. After a day's talk, it was agreed to drop the Lord's supper till the conference. This I submitted to. I did it for peace.

The conference met in London in 1792 ; and I was of

course arraigned at the bar for my conduct at Liverpool. However, I pleaded "not guilty." I could not see that I had committed any crime. I asked, Had I not full power given me from the conference to act as I judged for the best? Had I not done so? But I had caused a division in the society. I answered, "There would have been a greater division if I had acted otherwise, and a greater cause for it." After various things had been said, *pro* and *con*, the matter dropped; only my brethren in the opposition urged my removal from Liverpool the ensuing year. This I would not consent to, for two reasons: 1. My removing would imply that I had acted amiss,—a thing that I was not conscious of; and, secondly, as I had taken much pains, and suffered much, in procuring the people what I conceived to be their just liberty, I was not willing that any one should be sent who would undo all, and drive two-thirds of the people from us. At length that matter was settled, and I was permitted to return again. Mr. Joseph Bradford was appointed to be my colleague. As he had professed himself to be on the side of the Church, it was thought he was appointed as a check upon me. However, I knew him to be an upright, worthy man, and therefore made no objection against him; and as it was determined to have no sacrament that year in our chapels generally, I resolved to keep the order. We passed the year very agreeably, and had not one word of contention either about the sacrament or any thing else. Nor do I remember ever passing an easier year in all my life. We began preaching at Ormskirk, got a place to preach in, fitted it up with a pulpit and benches, and a couple of rooms adjoining, one of which we got furnished for the preacher, whenever he came. A man and his wife occupied the other, and looked after the little chapel, and did what the preacher had occasion for while there. We also formed a small society. A considerable sum of money

was begged for the above purposes ; but I was heartily sorry that it was given up some time after we left the circuit. We had contended with much opposition by mobs and riots ; but even these were quelled. A ringleader was taken up, and sent to prison ; but for the sake of his family, even our people begged him off, so that he was not tried at the sessions, to which he was bound : yet after the way was thus made, and matters in a fair way of being successful, it pained my mind to find that all was abandoned ; and if ever the place is attacked again, very likely the rabble will renew their opposition.

I observed before, that our numbers through the connection were less by three hundred than they were the year before : such a reduction I cannot remember we ever had. It was therefore determined at the next conference that some places should have the Lord's supper ; and Liverpool was one. My appointment was Bolton, to which place I came in very great hopes of peace and quietness. We had a good work at Bury, especially the first year : that society had been brought very low ; but we had a gracious ingathering. Also at a place called Radcliffe we began a society.

Our conference was this year at Bristol, and an uncomfortable time it was. We had much debate, and to little purpose. As our matters were not settled, and vast numbers of our brethren were still dissatisfied, a meeting was projected to be held at Lichfield, to see if some mode could be hit upon for the general good, to be offered at the ensuing conference. Who was the author of the meeting I never knew to this day. Being not only invited to this harmless convention, but strongly urged to go, I attended. We met at an inn, supposing that we could meet without being taken notice of, as Lichfield is a place where no Methodists reside. I feared that the scheme would do more harm than good : and so it proved. As for our as-

sembling there in secret, that was very improbable, as we were all preachers of long standing, and very much known all over the kingdom. My sole intention was to try any scheme that could be agreed upon to give our brethren, who desired it, all the ordinances of Christ. But when we were together, another thing was started: it was thought in many instances the districts were not sufficient for the necessary discipline in certain cases, and therefore it was judged that some other mode should be thought on; which was, that a number of superintendents should be appointed by the conference, to have the inspection of the whole connection. There was not so much as a thought that any thing should be done without the concurrence of the conference. For my own part, I was indifferent about the matter; and whether such a scheme would be for the better or no, I cannot say: it might have its use, and certainly would be liable to great abuse. However, the whole of this meeting gave great offence: the secret manner of holding it, and the place where it was held, all contributed to raise suspicions in the minds of the preachers who were not there. So that I may say, in the softest language, that little conventicle, though very harmless, did no good.

In 1795 our conference was held at Manchester; and at the same time and place a meeting was held by many trustees and others, who were strenuous for what they termed the "old plan." Several messages passed to and fro, from that meeting and the conference, to little purpose. At length nine preachers were chosen to draw up a plan of pacification, in which all were supposed to agree.

A scene opened this year which threatened the most terrible rent that had ever befallen the Methodists. It was introduced by a succession of productions under fictitious names, as Martin Luther, Paul and Silas, Aquila



and Priscilla, &c. They were drawn up with no small degree of art, and calculated to gain the affections of such as received them. There appeared much truth and a pretence of uprightness to run through the whole, so that many were highly prejudiced in favour of the writer. At length he appeared openly, by publishing a pamphlet, entitled, "The Progress of Liberty." In this virulent production, many things were published for facts without any proof. Many hints were thrown out calculated to prejudice the minds of the public against the preachers, especially the seniors. This pamphlet was eagerly bought up. Such as wished to find some objections against the preachers, thought they now had the desired occasion. The preachers in London wrote to the chairman of the district in which Mr. Kilham, the author of the above pamphlet, was, to call a meeting, and try to make him sensible of the impropriety of his conduct, in publishing a pamphlet calculated to asperse the whole body of preachers in so scandalous a manner. The meeting was called; but it answered no other end, than that of giving him fresh matter for slander and reproach; and finding that he had won over a considerable party to espouse his cause, it made him the more confident, insomuch that he appeared bold enough to set all his adversaries at defiance; and, I suppose, he thought, either that the conference durst not exclude them, or, if they did, that he would become the leader of a large party both of preachers and of people. Thus matters went on till the conference; and many of the preachers thought very favourably of him, till his trial came on; but then, hearing him make so poor and lame a defence, and owning that he had asserted many things without any sort of proof, they saw a little more into the man and his motives, and of course their minds were changed: they viewed him in a proper light. Much lenity was showed him, he owned; but he demurred to

the legality of the court. He pleaded for a public hearing ; that is, that his trial should be in the public chapel, and that all might come forward to hear and see, and all that chose might be permitted to speak. This by no means could be admitted ; for every united body has a right to try its own members ; and as for witnesses, there needed none ; for the witnesses against him were his own books. If he could vindicate them, he was clear ; if not, there could only be two things, one of which must be done : the one was, to own his fault ; the other was, for the conference to pass what censure or judgment they thought proper. Several days were taken up in labouring to convince him, that he had acted wrong in publishing so many things calculated to prejudice the whole nation against the preachers, and thereby to render their labours ineffectual ; and the greatest part of what he had written was either conjectural, or upon misinformation. But though he was confounded, and had little to say for himself, he appeared confident enough, judging from his abettors that he had little risk to run ; for it seems that he had been encouraged on his way from Alnwick to London. Indeed, some hints were thrown out, that the conference durst not expel him ; his party was so strong, that, let his cause be what it would, he must be kept in, or we must sink. At length the vote for his expulsion passed the conference, without a single voice to the contrary. In giving our vote in conference, all that are for the question stand up ; it is then reversed, and all who are against it stand up : the vote of his expulsion passed both ways ; and to render the matter more firm, the sentence was written in a book, and laid on the table ; and all who believed his sentence just were requested to sign it, which was done by the whole body, I believe every individual, except myself ; and the reason why I did not, was, because it was my office to deliver the sentence of conference to

him, which if I had not believed to be just, I should not have done. Such was the conduct of the conference with respect to Alexander Kilham; and I firmly believe, that all who took the lead in that transaction were led by the strictest uprightness, and acted in the fear of God.

We had really a troublesome year, and much hurt was done, but more especially when a majority of trustees could be found on his side; there they violently took our chapels from us, and herein showed that they were unfaithful men. It was once thought advisable to commence a suit in the King's Bench, to try the legality of such unjust proceedings; but considering the tediousness, expenses, and uncertainty of litigations, we judged it best to try to build new chapels where we had a prospect of doing good, and so leave the robbers in possession of their spoil.

The conference came on at Leeds in 1797; and it was confidently given out that a vast number of preachers would join what was called the "New Connection." A vast concourse of people assembled at Leeds, and Mr. Kilham and his friends took a vacant Baptist chapel, and formed themselves into a conference; several of our preachers seemed to waver, and, as we understood, attended their meetings as well as ours; and several we thought would join them; but in the issue, three, and only three, travelling preachers actually joined them.\* In the latter end of December an accident happened to Mr. Kilham, which took him off. A small bone stuck in his throat; and though it was extracted, yet some vessel broke, so that it proved his end. A life thus closed, in the very height of so much disturbance raised in the church of God, would naturally lay a foundation for various reflections; and various things were said: however, his friends said he died in much peace. Before I close this unpleasant subject, I would make a remark or two.

\* Two of whom have left them.

We see that however obscure or useless a person may be in the church and state, yet he may be extremely hurtful; and though not an instrument of good, yet an instrument of much harm. We have many instances of this in history. It is certain, that, during the twelve years that Mr. Kilham travelled in the connection he was of little use, as Mr. Pawson has made appear from the Minutes, tracing every place where he travelled, and the numbers in the societies; and truly, he made so small a figure, that I am inclined to think many preachers did not know him. I never heard him, but I have been told that his gifts as a preacher were rather beneath a mediocrity. But I am not acquainted with any man who entered our connection that ever did half the mischief. I fear that in Lancashire and Yorkshire many are driven into infidelity and to eternal ruin. A fool may so fire a house or a town, that all the wise men cannot extinguish the flames.

Again: I would observe, suppose I am in one of the most regular families in the kingdom, and am determined to act the dark ill-natured spy: I have my doomsday-book, in which I mark every little slip, in word or deed, I put it down with my own meaning, or comment upon it; after I have waited for a convenient season, I bring into judgment this partial chronicle against the person or persons, with all the ill-natured reports that I have been capable of scraping together: might not the most innocent characters be thus made to appear as black as midnight? Now, if that may be the case in a private family, what shall we say concerning so large a body as the Methodists? That this was the case and conduct of Mr. Kilham, must appear to every impartial inquirer into his proceedings.

I would further observe, that when persons become advocates for a party, they will act very inconsistently with their natural turn of mind. From Mr. Kilham's

pamphlets many were made to think that Methodism was a very expensive system, and that the people were fleeced, and half plundered. He has thrown out many hints, as if the preachers were really making a gain of the people, and more especially the old preachers. There are none who travel in the connection that have been longer in it than myself: of course, I am implicated in this condemnation. I now write in the presence of Him who sees the secrets of all hearts, and shall fairly represent my own case, and very likely it may be nearly that of many senior preachers.

I began to preach among the Methodists occasionally in the year 1760. In the beginning of the year 1761 I might be said to begin to travel; that is, I supplied the lack of service of several preachers, when they were sick, or went to see their friends at a distance, and particularly in the Birstal circuit, which was then of great extent, and also in Leeds; and this I continued to do till August, when I set out for the conference at London. What I did was gratis, not even having a penny for the turnpikes, except that the steward of Bradford circuit gave me once half-a-guinea, and when I set out for the conference the steward of Leeds circuit gave me fifteen shillings. I had a little money of my own, and some articles to dispose of: the latter I left in the hands of a person to sell for me, which he did, and, being poor, he disposed of the money, and soon after died; so that business was settled.

I set out for London, and from thence into Wales: here my work was rugged and disagreeable enough. I had no quarterage, no travelling expenses; but now and then a shilling or half-a-crown was put into my hands. Sometimes I was obliged to dine and lodge at an inn, and to pay both for my horse and myself. In this manner I passed the year, preaching as I could, sometimes under cover, and often in the open air, even throughout the

winter, which, some may remember, was very severe. Some time before the conference, I made an excursion into Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, counties in which none of our preachers had ever set foot. It appeared to me, that in Pembrokeshire there was a probability of doing good, as I preached several times in Pembroke town, and in various other places: accordingly I was sent from Leeds conference back to Pembrokeshire, where every thing was quite new, nor had I one shilling given me, either for the expense of my journey thither, or for my support when I got there. But it may be said, "How did you live?" I lived upon my own stock, till Providence raised me friends. I formed a circuit, including about two hundred and fifty persons; by Christmas; and at the end of the year I went to the London conference; but still at my own expense, except some small matters which a friend here and there might give me, which could not amount to much, as the people were generally poor. From the conference at London I was appointed for Castlebar, in Ireland. Here for the first time I received thirty shillings from conference, for my expenses on the way. Fifteen shillings I paid for a place on the outside of the coach to Bristol, besides the expenses on the road; twenty-seven shillings I paid the captain for my passage to Dublin, besides provision, mate, sailors, &c. When I got to Dublin, I had about a hundred miles to travel to Castlebar; and even there my allowance was very short. I think when I left Wales my stock was about thirty pounds. It was considerably reduced by the time I got to Castlebar. I stayed two years in Ireland; and from Limerick I came to the Manchester conference. My stock of money was now reduced to about fifteen guineas. It was thought there was a probability of raising a society in Glasgow, and I was appointed to make trial; and out of my fifteen guineas I gave nine pounds for a horse, saddle, &c. I

received from the conference three guineas to take me to Glasgow,—a place where we had no society, no place to receive me, no place to preach in ; strong prejudices to oppose ; and a long, cold, dark winter before me. How I passed my time there, is already related. My second year in Scotland was agreeable, particularly in Edinburgh : there all my wants were abundantly supplied.

In 1767 I left Scotland, being appointed for Chester. I bought a horse out of my own pocket, nor do I remember that I had any thing for travelling expenses. When I came to Chester my property amounted to six guineas. Judge now, how rich I was become, after near seven years of hard toil and labour. In Chester I married a wife with a little property, the greatest part of which I have lost by a person breaking. From Chester we were appointed for Dublin, and had two guineas to take us thither : there we had all things richly to enjoy. From thence we removed to Cork. Meantime my wife bore a child, which we were under the necessity of putting out to nurse, my wife being so greatly indisposed. All I received that year for my wife, and the nursing of the child, was either four pounds or four guineas. From Cork we were appointed to Manchester ; and I think it was either three or four guineas that I had, to take my wife and child thither. I will further add, for twenty years, what I have received for preaching has not kept my family with food ; and I can assure my reader, we do not keep an extravagant table.

Now let any of Mr. Kilham's abettors judge what cause there is for all the reproach and slander which he has raised against the old preachers. Nay, let them judge between him and me, in one instance. He was appointed from Newcastle to Aberdeen, where every thing was provided, a house, fire, candle, stipend, for himself and family ; a large friendly society, and fifteen guineas to take him

thither. I was appointed from Limerick in Ireland, to Glasgow, above six hundred miles,—no society, no lodging, no place to preach in, no friend to advise with, nothing for either board or quarterage; and three guineas were all I had for the whole. Now, I say, let his friends judge between us. He came among us a poor servant; and it is surprising to me, if, by one means or another, he has not left some thousands behind him. If it should be objected, I am boasting, I may say that matter of fact has compelled me; and I write thus in the just vindication of myself and my fellow-labourers, who have borne the burden and heat of the day. Mr. Kilham and many others have entered into and enjoy the fruit of our labours, which many of our junior brethren gratefully acknowledge.

Several things concurred to make the years 1796 and 1797 a trying season to me, such as I pray God I may never meet with again. But they are over; yet the remembrance is bitter to me. I have been foolish enough to expect fair gales, till I arrive at the haven of eternal repose; but I have in this been disappointed.

However, in those stormy days, we had some fruit in Oldham circuit, especially in Saddleworth. I left that rough valley in a very promising situation in 1789; but there had been a withering time, and we found them very low; but the Lord revived his work amazingly, so that the chapel was far too small on the Lord's day, and in different places where we preached in private houses, on the week-days, we had good congregations, and not without fruit.

My next remove was to Halifax. Here I had laboured in years past with much satisfaction. I might have expected something extraordinary, as we had heard of a wonderful revival, and of scores being converted in an evening: but if so, there had been a dreadful falling away; for certainly they were in a very low condition. The



matter was, that during the noisy time, which was called "the revival," all discipline was laid aside; sensible people were shocked and disgusted at seeing such irregular and unscriptural proceedings; little fruit appeared; many poor men ran themselves out of breath, in staying late at nights, and neglected their families, and even their labour, and of course got into debt, without taking conscientious care to discharge it. I doubt that is an evil too general. I believe oftentimes God begins a good work, but poor ignorant men will needs take it out of his hands; and by noise and clamour, striving to work upon the passions of people without their judgments being informed, bring it into confusion and contempt; and by this means the enemy gains no small advantage. I have ever been fearful of damping or hurting the work of God, and therefore have borne with things which I did not approve of; thinking there might be more of God in those irregularities than I was aware of. But, to speak in the softest terms: many, very many, of those hasty converts have proved like the stony-ground hearers,—in the time of temptation they have fallen away. Now, if there is indeed a work of grace upon their hearts, inquiry should be made whence they came, and how that work began, and appoint a time and place where they may be further instructed, by having their judgments informed in things which are essential; and if they can read, they should be pointed to suitable passages of Scripture, and directed to meet in class with some proper leader, so that the work may be established, and the divine seed nourished, and the work confirmed in their souls.

In 1799 I removed to Bristol. I could have wished to find this venerable mother church in a more lively situation than what it was really in. The wound which was made by the division a few years before was not healed. I think both I and my colleagues did what we could to

bury old grievances ; but the deadly effects of the old enmities were not destroyed. My hands hung down, fearing I was labouring in vain, and spending my strength for naught. Week-night congregations were small, the classes did not meet so well as I thought they might ; this bowed down my spirit, and often made my hands weak, and my knees were feeble. And yet there are many excellent ones in this city, whose names will be found in the book of life.

In the month of May I made an excursion into Cornwall ; in which I confess I was highly gratified, both there and in my way thither, particularly at Plymouth-Dock. On the Lord's day I preached in the forenoon at the Dock, and at two at Plymouth, and administered the Lord's supper to a considerable company of communicants, and returned to the Dock, and preached at six. Being under the necessity of being at St. Austle the next day, and the coach setting out the next morning at six from Tar-Point, which lies on the other side the water, a friend sent me word that he should be glad if I would take a bed at his house. The evening being fine, about a dozen, chiefly young persons, took a boat, and being singers, they sung several hymns, which I felt very sweet ; and as we passed by several first-rate men-of-war, which lay at anchor, it brought the men upon deck, but I did not hear one scoffing word from any of them. I do not remember ever to have enjoyed a little trip with greater satisfaction in all my life. I likewise met with very kind treatment at the house of my kind host, and slept comfortably for the first night in Cornwall. The next morning at six I set out for St. Austle ; and when I came to Liskeard, I found that preaching was published for me there that evening. I was sorry I could not stay ; for it is a noted place for Deists, as I am told, and especially for the disciples of Mr. Paine ; and as it was known that I had

answered his "Age of Reason," I understood many of that fraternity intended hearing me. I met with very kind treatment at St. Austle, and had their chapel well filled two nights. A kind friend took me in his carriage on the Wednesday to Truro, where we had a crowded audience, and a good congregation the following morning. I feared my time would not allow me to get so far as Penzance, and the Land's End; but the kind friends so ordered matters that my wish was gratified. On Thursday I came to Falmouth, where Mr. Wesley had like to have lost his life; but all is peace now. We had a full chapel, and several preachers were so kind as to give me the meeting. Friday, May 16th, I came to Helston; but the night was very stormy, it rained much, and, the people living wide, our congregation was not so large as was expected.

Saturday, 17th, I came to Penzance: and, as in every place before, was received with much kindness. In the evening I walked to Newlyn, the native place of Mr. Jacob. On Sunday morning I had a sweet season at Penzance, in speaking from Phil. ii, 5. In the evening we were a little at a loss how to proceed: the chapel was too small, and the wind was so high that there was no preaching abroad; but they removed such benches as were moveable, as many got into the house as could, and the remainder stood at the windows. But we were warm enough within. However, I hope the labour was not in vain. May 19th, I was resolved to gratify my curiosity with a sight of the Land's End; and really a tremendous sight it is: the high rocks, with the deep caverns, caused by the turbulent waves, made every thing look awful. Here Mr. Charles Wesley made the verse,

"Lo, on a narrow neck of land,  
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand  
Secure, insensible," &c.

I wished to have made a little trip to the isles of Scilly,

but time would not permit. From the Land's End I went to St. Just; and although they had just enlarged their chapel, it was well filled. One would wonder where the people came from; for St. Just is but a village, which lies on a point of land among rocks and mines, and appears to have few inhabitants near it. I returned after preaching to Penzance; and on Tuesday I went to St. Ives, one of the most agreeable towns for situation in Cornwall. It is in the form of a crescent in the bottom of a fine bay, which opens into St. George's Channel, and a place of considerable trade. The chapel is large; and it was well crowded with many of the better sort, and I think some clergy. I had liberty in pointing out the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. I partly expected to preach the day following at Copperhouse, a place so called on account of many copper-works in the neighbourhood; but as I could only preach at noon, and the people could not leave their work at that hour, I passed on to Redruth. Here the enlarged chapel was well filled, and I was entertained with much kindness and respect by a family whom I have heard much spoken of, namely, the Harpers; and a number of Christian friends gave me the meeting. The Methodists have Redruth to themselves; theirs may be called the established religion; for the church is a considerable way out of the town; and there are no dissenters, except a very few Quakers.

Thursday, 22d.—I preached at Gwennap, and the enlarged chapel would not hold the people; but the wind was so high that I could not preach abroad; so as many crowded in as possible, and the rest around the windows. The next day I went to St. Agnes. Cornwall abounds with saints; and I hope with many of the right sort, even such as God hath made saints. This is a small town, which lies among rocks and mines; and the people have enlarged their chapel, which was well filled; and as there

had been a considerable work of God, I enforced Heb. ii, 1, and hope it was not in vain, though I was sorry to hear of a refractory spirit manifested in some. However, as my visit in Cornwall was that of friendship, and in no official capacity, I did not think it proper to interfere in any disputes, except by giving a word of advice where I thought it was likely to do good. From thence I returned through Redruth to Tuckingmill, a small village containing but a few houses; yet there is a chapel, which will contain, perhaps, twelve hundred hearers; and although the afternoon and evening were exceedingly stormy, yet the chapel was well filled, and I had much liberty. The night continued very stormy, and there was no probability that either the chapel in Redruth or Gwennap, where I was to preach on Sunday, would contain half the people that were expected to attend; for it was given out twenty miles round about, that I should preach in what the Cornish term "the pit," but Mr. Wesley calls an "amphitheatre;" that is, a large hollow, which will hold abundance of people: and it is astonishing how it excites the country to flock together, when it is reported that any one is to preach there. Moreover, it is remarked, that it is sure to be a fair day when there is to be preaching in the pit: however, my faith was put to the stretch, as it was so stormy a night. But I was told, a number of young men spent a part of the night in prayer. Yet in the morning it looked very unpromising, and was so wet, that I was obliged to preach in the chapel at Tuckingmill, and we squeezed as many in as we could. However, before I had 'done, it cleared up, and, the sun breaking out, the street in Redruth was quite dry at noon, and at half past one thousands were gathered. I stood in the most vacant place, and urged upon them that awful passage, Job xiv, 10. All were still as night, listening with deep attention; even the Quakers mixed in the crowd. From thence we

hastened to the pit ; and to be sure, it was amazing to see horse and foot flocking from all parts, and some carriages. My friend who accompanied me said, he thought there were a thousand horses : however, I suppose there might be some hundreds ; and a multitude of poor little ragged boys on all sides came to earn a penny by holding the horses, so that they were kept at a proper distance from the congregation. I do not remember ever to have preached to so great a multitude, except once on the Green, at Glasgow. It was truly an awful sight. But I cannot say that I had that liberty which I have sometimes. Indeed, I had a charming time at Tuckingmill in the morning, and at Redruth at noon ; but I seldom find that sweetness three times running. Besides, I had exerted myself the two former times, particularly in the street at Redruth, so that my strength rather failed me, insomuch that I grew somewhat hoarse ; and perhaps my gracious Lord might see it meet to leave me a little to myself, seeing he takes gracious methods to hide pride from our eyes, and keep us dependant upon himself. It is amazing how such a spot should ever be chosen for a place to preach in, amid rocks and mines, and scarcely a house near it ; and that it should continue to excite the curiosity of people to come from such a distance to hear the word of God in a wilderness. As I had a considerable distance to travel, and preach twice the next day, it was thought advisable to proceed to Truro, as that would shorten my journey nearly ten miles ; so here I rested in peace and plenty, humbled under a sense of God's amazing goodness and my own vileness, yet hoping I had done something for him.

Monday, 26th.—We set out rather early, and stopped at a place called the Indian Queens, to breakfast. From this neighbourhood came that worthy man, John Murlin ; and I saw his elder brother, a serious old man, ripening

for glory ; though I could perceive him very anxious respecting the legacy left by his brother. I told him, it was in safe hands, and would be paid at the appointed time. What a temptation, or a snare, is this world, even to good men ! We got to Bodmin by twelve o'clock, twenty-three miles from Truro, where I preached to the smallest congregation I had in Cornwall. Though it is a principal town, and where the assize is held in summer, yet I find our interest is small in it.

From Bodmin I crossed the country, about fifteen miles, to Port-Isaac. The road was so very bad as almost to set us fast in some places, and very hilly. However, we got to the place in time to preach to a crowded audience, and were cordially received by an old disciple, an Israelite indeed. The situation of this small town is singular. It lies at the bottom of a narrow creek, and in a narrow compass, surrounded on all sides by very high hills, except the opening to the sea ; and it does not appear that it can be enlarged, it is so enclosed on every side. However, the gospel has found its way thither for many years, and not in vain.

Tuesday, 27th.—We had to remount the hills out of Port-Isaac to Camelford, where I was to preach at noon ; and although it was the middle of the day, and not many Methodists in the town, yet we had the chapel filled ; and a precious time it was, I believe, to the people as well as myself ; so that I trust my labour here was not in vain. But having a stage of sixteen miles to Launceston, where I had to preach in the evening, we did but just arrive in time to preach to a crowded audience ; and I had considerable liberty in describing the way to the kingdom to be through tribulation. Here I hope the word was made profitable ; and here ended my excursion through Cornwall. This I must say for the Cornish, both preachers and people, they treated me with very great kindness, and showed me

much greater respect than I deserved. There would be no great cross in itinerating in this manner, where in every place all things we wish for are made ready to one's hand. Groups of kind friends waiting in every place to receive one, and crowds assembling to hear, are exceedingly pleasing; and all the company in every friend's house looking up to one, as to a superior species of being. How flattering to vanity! and what need of an humbling ballast! How different is this state of things from that of our circuits in the general, where we must experience an humbling reverse! Amid all the kindness in Cornwall, the Lord gave me a sense of my own unworthiness, which kept me low in my own esteem.

I wished to pay another visit to the loving society at Plymouth-Dock, on my return, but time would not permit; and I did not know but that I was to preach at Tiverton in Devonshire the next day. It was necessary that I should be at Exeter by noon, a distance of forty-four miles. I therefore rose early; and truly the morning was lovely, and the front of my chamber opened into a fine country; the winged choristers were all awake, and their different notes were charming; but my business required haste. I got to Exeter by one o'clock; but hearing nothing from Tiverton, I was very glad to rest where I was. Exeter is delightfully situated. I walked through the spacious cathedral, saw the monuments, the library, the skeleton of the young woman who was executed some years ago, as I was told, for the murder of her child. But, however agreeable the situation of this city is, religion is at a very low ebb in our society: I had the smallest congregations here that I have seen since I left Bristol. Yet there are a few sensible, lively souls, in Exeter.

Thursday, 29th.—I preached at Taunton, and looked into the large church from whence that great and good



man, Joseph Alleine, was ejected: I venerate the places where those worthy men laboured; and what a loss did the Church of England sustain when her rulers expelled from her pulpits two thousand good men, among whom were Joseph Alleine, Richard Baxter, and Philip Henry!

Friday, 30th.—I came safely to Bristol, and found my dear family all tolerably well. All thanks be to God! I stand amazed at his goodness to me: even this little tour impresses a fresh sense of his mercies upon my mind. But I feel pain that the work does not thrive as I could wish to see it in this circuit; and yet there are many precious souls, whom I have cause to love, and who, I believe, walk humbly with their God. The conference drew on; and a brother having been dead some time at Lambeth, and leaving me joint-executor with his widow, the property being in London, in different hands, and a considerable number of legatees, it seemed necessary that I should be on the spot, in order that I might do my best to see the property collected, and the legacies paid. I therefore left Bristol after being one year there, and removed to London, where I and my family arrived August 20th, 1800. Having now taken notice of the most material matters which have occurred during forty years of my ministry, and sixty of my life, I must here close, perhaps finally. The above space of time has been filled up with mercies innumerable from my gracious God. He hath borne with my numberless blunders, inconstancies, and imperfections; and I hope the time and labour have not altogether been in vain. A vast number of my junior brethren have got before me, having finished their course, and entered into the joy of their Lord, while I am still in the wilderness, still in the field of battle. They have entered the haven of rest, while I am

“Still toss'd on a sea of distress,  
Hard toiling to make the bless'd shore.”

Too, too many, during the above period, have turned aside, and plunged back into the world again, while I, O infinite mercy ! O boundless love ! have been happily preserved ; preserved even when I otherwise should have departed from the living God.

“ Turn aside, a sight admire,  
I the living wonder am ;  
See a bush that burns with fire,  
Unconsumed amidst the flame.”

As it is highly probable I may never trouble the public with any further account of so unworthy a subject as myself, there is one thing which I would pointedly notice to all my brethren in the ministry ; and that is, to beware of spending too much time in company among their richer acquaintance ; but spare a little to look into the habitations of the poor. The poor have the gospel preached to them ; our Lord was poor ; he associated with the poor ; and, I can assure my brethren, we have the greatest number of pious souls among the poor. Do look into their poor habitations : they cannot invite you to a dinner or a supper ; they have it not in their power ; but if you look into their cottage or garret, they will receive you as an angel of God : and as I hope you wish to do them good, I can assure you that a few words spoken to them personally will do them more good than a hundred pompous and popular harangues. If this method of visiting the poor in their own habitations were more attended to both by preachers and leaders, it would have a blessed effect, and save many from backsliding, and consequently from eternal destruction. What I recommend to others I try to do myself, and always have satisfaction therein. My day is far spent ; and I wish to do all the good I can, so that I may fight the good fight of faith, and finish my course with joy, through my never-failing Redeemer.

THE following account of Mr. Taylor's death was given in the Methodist Magazine :—

Died at Birch-house, near Bolton, in Lancashire, on Tuesday morning, October 15th, 1816, the Rev. Thomas Taylor, aged almost eighty years. From the year 1761, when he was appointed by Mr. Wesley to a circuit, he continued his itinerant labours till the last conference. Then the pressure of age, with the effects of fifty-five years' hard ministerial labour, obliged this holy, faithful, and resolute minister of Christ to acknowledge that he was no longer able to fill the place of an effective man in the connection. But in ceasing to be an itinerant, he remitted no labour to which his strength was adequate; nay, about the close of his eminently useful life, he exerted himself beyond his strength. But his heart and soul were in the work of God; and hence, when labouring under that complaint which terminated in his death, he would ascend the pulpit to preach "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Having engaged to preach in the Bolton chapels on Sunday, the 13th of October, and the following day, he arrived at the house of his esteemed friend, Roger Holland, Esq., on the preceding Tuesday. The following account of the remaining days of his life is taken from a letter written by Mrs. Holland to his son-in-law, Mr. Robert Miller :—

"On Tuesday evening, October 8th, Mr. Taylor arrived at Birch-house, in his usual state of health and cheerfulness. Wednesday morning, he observed that he did not think he had passed so comfortable a night for twelve months. He attended to his studies as usual, and occasionally walked to see a few poor people.

"On Saturday night he had two violent attacks of his complaint, which obliged him to sit up till he was a little recovered; but though he felt himself much enfeebled, he

accompanied Mr. Holland to Bolton the next morning, where he preached from, 'Our light afflictions,' &c., 2 Cor. iv, 17, 18. It was observed by his hearers, that he was particularly animated, and that his views of glory, in the discussion of his subject, were more than usually bright. He dined at Mr. Rothwell's, where he evidenced a spirit of lively gratitude and animated praise. But the effects of his morning exertions soon became so visible in much weakness and bodily pain, that his friends judged it improper for him to undertake the evening service; Mr. Holland, in particular, was very importunate in dissuading him from the attempt. No entreaties, however, could dissuade him from his purpose of setting out for the old chapel; in going to which, he was obliged frequently to pause, and once for the space of nearly a quarter of an hour. Having arrived at the chapel, he went into Mr. Grindrod's, where he remained a short space in order to gain breath; during which time, a local preacher began the service. When he had concluded prayer, he found the veteran saint ready to enter upon his office, which he did, by taking these words for his text, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.' He seemed to have forgotten all his weakness, and to be unusually led out, while explaining the passage. In one part of the discourse, he raised himself, and said with great emphasis, 'I should like to die like an old soldier, sword in hand.' That night he had another attack in his breast, which painfully interrupted his sleeping, and caused considerable exhaustion the following morning; notwithstanding which, he spent two hours in visiting the sick, but the effort was attended with a great deal of difficulty. He again preached with animation in the evening, from 1 Corinthians ii, 12.

"Through the whole of the evening he was particularly cheerful, and often very spiritual. He retired about

eleven, and intending to accompany Mr. Holland to Manchester the next morning, he shaved before he went to bed. On Tuesday morning Mr. Holland, thinking that he lay longer than usual, as he did not hear him stir, tapped at his door; but no answer being returned, he entered the room, and found him lying by the bed-side at full length, more than half-dressed, but perfectly composed, as in a quiet sleep; the chariots of Israel and the horsemen had come, and the prepared saint had ascended with his bright convoy."

Grateful to Mrs. Holland for the foregoing account, and for the honourable testimony which she has given in favour of Mr. Taylor's eminent piety and usefulness, we shall briefly mention a few particulars relative to his character.

1. Throughout the long course of his ministry, so uniform was his Christian walk, that he never brought the slightest reproach upon his sacred profession. The present race of Methodist preachers know, from experience, little or nothing of the difficulties with which the first race had to contend. Hunger, cold, weariness, bad lodgings, and persecution, in various forms, were their lot; and of each of these Mr. Taylor had his share. He lived long enough to see Methodism in comparative honour, and himself and brethren, in general, comfortably provided for. But so great a change in his circumstances had no bad effect upon his spirit, temper, or conduct. He was the same man of God, when in London, Manchester, Liverpool, &c., that he had been when subjected to more than ordinary privations. A great change in outward circumstances, especially from penury and reproach to plenty and honour, has frequently proved fatal to many; but from such a change Mr. Taylor suffered no physical, mental, or moral injury.

2. The diligence which he used for the purpose of improving his mind, that he might be able to feed the people

with knowledge and understanding, is highly creditable to his memory, as a Christian minister. He drew his divinity from the sacred volume; and such was the estimate which he set upon that pure source of truth, that, in addition to his perusing particular parts of it, upon numberless occasions, there is sufficient ground to believe that he read the whole of it regularly through upward of fifty times. But his extraordinary attention to the Scriptures did not make him inattentive to those works with which a minister of Christ ought, if possible, to be acquainted. Hundreds upon hundreds of ancient and modern publications on theology, sacred and profane history, natural and moral philosophy, &c., he read with care and attention.

3. He was a man of strict order, punctually attending to whatever he took in hand; and perhaps few have ever excelled him in the practice of that very important, but much-neglected duty, the redeeming of time. He was too sensible of its value to waste any part of it in trifling conversation, or mere complimentary visits. His not ordinarily suffering his hours of study to be broken in upon may possibly have induced some to imagine that his prevailing disposition was unsocial, if not morose; but those who knew him well were of a different opinion.

4. His devoting two hours every day (Sundays and conference time excepted) to visiting and relieving poor and afflicted persons, proves that he was a true philanthropist.

5. To the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists he was a steady and firm adherent; and he manifested upon all occasions a sincere and cordial love to the objects of his pastoral care. Meantime he was so far from being a bigot, that he esteemed and loved as brethren all, however opposed to him in matters of opinion, who, he had reason to believe, were true followers of the Lord Jesus.

6. By continuing to walk humbly and closely with God, and to be diligent in reading and study, he retained to the last the spirit of preaching, as well as the talents, by which he had been enabled so long to feed those of the flock of Christ who sat under his ministry.

7. Mr. Taylor's views of both the law and the gospel were clear and distinct ; and hence, while he maintained, that evangelical obedience is not only a fruit of faith, but indispensably necessary in order to its being retained, he did not neglect to inculcate, as a truth of vital importance, that the holiest men on earth are every moment indebted to the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ for their continuance in a state of acceptance with God. He did not glory in his works ; for he well knew, that however sincerely and conscientiously performed, they could not stand the rigour of divine justice ; and therefore he availed himself of the covenant of mercy, not that he might sin with impunity, but that, notwithstanding all his defects, of which he had an exquisite and humbling sense, he might still be able to " worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Some preachers, by not entertaining similar views, have exhibited the gospel in a mutilated state, and preached it in a dry, cold, and unedifying manner. So did not the venerable Thomas Taylor : hence the divine unction which generally accompanied his sermons.

We cannot see the heroes of Methodism, however aged, drop one after another into eternity, without being sensibly affected. We love, nay, we venerate the memory of those men of God, who, with little less than apostolical intrepidity, in breaking up the ground which we now peaceably occupy, endured many a fight of affliction. But they rest from their labours, and we are hastening to the conclusion of ours.

" Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his

saints," whether occasioned by the lapse of "slowly rolling years," or an acute or lingering disease. The time, place, and circumstances of the death of each of them are all under the control and direction of Him who for the welfare of his people regulates and overrules every event. Mr. Taylor's death was so sudden, that he experienced little or nothing of the formality of dying. His strong and well-formed body was greatly worn by age; but, like a machine well constructed in all its parts, and all those parts so skilfully united as to wear alike, it continued to be a suitable, and, upon the whole, a comfortable habitation for his spirit, till at last

"The weary springs of life stood still."

Next to Mr. Wesley, he filled the place of an effective man considerably longer than any other Methodist preacher.

---

THE conference thus speak of this excellent man in their annual Minutes:—

"Thomas Taylor, who was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus in early life. He commenced his itinerant career in the year 1761; and was a most laborious, faithful, and eminently successful minister of Christ, for the long space of fifty-six years. In the early part of his public life, when Methodism was but in its infancy, he had, together with his contemporaries and fellow-labourers in that great work, to endure much from hunger, cold, weariness, and persecution; but he met and surmounted these difficulties with a truly apostolical intrepidity; and, under circumstances which would have overwhelmed a mind of ordinary energies, he pursued, with indefatigable assiduity, a course of study and labour



of uncommon magnitude. Though for many of the first years of his ministry he had to take long and frequent journeys, and to preach a great number of sermons, yet, by habits of early rising; and diligent improvement of his whole time, he acquired a respectable share of useful literature. To this, however, he conscientiously avoided giving a prominence in his preaching, and made it strictly subordinate and subservient to the doctrines of the gospel. His discourses, which were always short, were chiefly of a practical and experimental character; and to the last he was very fervent and impressive in the pulpit. He was a lover of Christian discipline, as established among the Methodists; and was zealous and firm in its enforcement. As a pastor, he evinced the most commendable diligence, visiting, where it was at all practicable, every part of the flock of Christ under his care; for which purpose he generally set apart two hours in the day: and this practice he continued to the last week of his life. In his family, he set the Lord always before him, studying how he might best promote the salvation of his household; and in the worship of the family he was most regular, and delightfully solemn. In the private circle of his friends he was cheerful and improving, knowing well how to combine rational instruction with spiritual edification. His natural temper was independent and irritable; but these imperfections were so habitually under the subduing influence of divine grace, as to be rarely perceptible even to his most intimate friends; and in the decline of life, he imbibed a heavenly sweetness of spirit which was seldom interrupted. In short, the good degree of learning which he attained, his extensive labours, his unceasing activity in the best of causes, the almost unparalleled length of his course of efficient ministerial duties, and, above all, his close and constant walk with God, and universal devotedness to his glory, placed him in the highest class of the

servants of God on earth ; and, we have no doubt, he is now found near the throne of Him in whose blood he had washed his robes. His death was sudden, and to his friends unexpected ; but, with respect to himself, it was doubtless followed by an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. He died at Birch-house, near Bolton, the residence of his friend Roger Holland, Esq., on the 16th of October, 1816, in the seventy-ninth year of his age ; having, only a few hours before his departure, in an animated sermon, set forth the deep things of God."

---

### THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER'S DEATH.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE REV. THOMAS TAYLOR.

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

SERVANT of God ! well done,  
 Rest from thy loved employ !  
 The battle's fought, the victory won,  
 Enter thy Master's joy ;  
 —The voice at midnight came,  
 He started up to hear ;  
 A mortal arrow pierced his frame,  
 He fell,—but felt no fear.

At home amidst alarms,  
 It found him in the field ;  
 A veteran slumbering on his arms,  
 Beneath his red-cross shield :  
 His sword was in his hand,  
 Still warm with recent fight ;  
 Ready that moment at command  
 Through rock and steel to smite.

It was a two-edged blade,  
 Of heavenly temper keen ;  
 And double were the wounds it made  
 Where'er it glanced between ;

'Twas death to sin,—'twas life  
To all that mourn'd their sin;  
It kindled and it silenced strife,  
Made war and peace within.

Stout hearts before it fell,  
Subdued by wrath and love;  
'Twas dreadful as the flames of hell,  
Bright as the beams above;  
Heroes were wont to name  
The weapons of their might;  
This was a brand of matchless fame,  
—The word of God, in fight.

Oft with its fiery force  
His arm had quell'd the foe;  
And laid, resistless in his course,  
The alien armies low:  
Bent on such glorious toils,  
The world to him was loss;  
But all his trophies, all his spoils,  
He hung upon the cross.

At midnight came the cry,  
"To meet thy God prepare,"  
He woke,—he caught his Captain's eye;  
Then, strong in faith and prayer,  
His spirit with a bound  
Burst its encumbering clay;  
—His tent at sun-rise on the ground  
A darken'd ruin lay.

The pains of death are past,  
Labour and sorrow cease;  
And life's long warfare closed at last,  
His soul is found in peace.  
—Soldier of Christ, well done!  
Begin thy new employ;  
Sing, while eternal ages run,  
Thy Master and his joy.

MR. JAMES ROGERS.

---

SINCE I first began to recommend the great love of God in Christ Jesus to others, I have had many solicitations to give some account of his dealings with my own soul, yet I never could prevail on myself to attempt it till now. But having kept no journal, it cannot be expected that the following pages should contain any thing more than a recital of a few particular circumstances which made the deepest impression upon my memory at the time they occurred. If these, or any of them, are made a blessing to my friends, let them give God the glory.

I was born in the north riding of Yorkshire, in a large village called Marsk, in February, 1749. I was put to school early, and taught to read the Scriptures from a child ; in some parts of which I found singular delight.

The Spirit of God began to strive with me when I was about three or four years old. On hearing a passing-bell, or seeing a corpse, I was very thoughtful, and would often ask my parents pertinent questions about a future state. On seeing lightning, or hearing a loud clap of thunder, my fears were usually alarmed to a high degree ; and the more so as an impression always followed me, that it was God speaking from the clouds ; and as I greatly expected, at these times, that he was just descending to judge the world, I would run to the door to see him come ! Such ideas as these were much increased and confirmed by several dreams, which I had from my infancy, about death, judgment, heaven, and hell.

When I was about ten years of age, I dreamed one

night I saw fire bursting out of the earth in several parts ; that it raged so furiously, and spread with such rapidity, that in a few seconds the whole globe was but one blaze ! I thought I saw all the inhabitants of the place where I lived, struck with inexpressible consternation and horror : and especially the bad people, as I called them, whom I had known to curse and swear, and get drunk ; with many of my play-fellows, who were accustomed to lie, and cheat, and play on the sabbath : these I thought set up such dreadful shrieks and yells as were enough to pierce a heart of stone. As I looked up, the face of the sky seemed totally overspread with blackness. Instantly the forked lightnings began to play, till the heavens were all in one glare, and such loud peals of thunder followed, as I had never heard. The sun I could see no more ; but I thought I got a transient sight of the moon, which appeared larger than ever I had seen it before, and as red as a huge mass of blood. The heavens seemed all in motion, and were exceedingly agitated ; they appeared to work, and heave and rock from side to side, till not one star was left remaining : thus in my imagination was that scripture fulfilled “ And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” The sky seemed next to pass away, or, as I remember to have read, “ to be wrapped together as a scroll.” My favourite passage I now saw fulfilled, namely, “ And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool : his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him : thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him : the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”—Daniel vii, 9, 10.

The thoughts I had about the deplorable state of my

guilty neighbours now seemed swallowed up in a most painful anxiety for my own safety. I was waiting in expectation of a summons to the bar ; but, deeply conscious that I was unprepared, was alarmed to such a degree that I awoke.

After recollecting myself a little, and finding that I was still an inhabitant of this world, my joy was inexpressible ! Nevertheless, it had a most solemn effect on my mind, and the impression remained for many weeks. How true are those words in Job xxxiii, “ God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not ; in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed ; then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction ! ” From this time, I began to feel great desires to be taught how I might obtain a preparation to meet my Judge with comfort.

On the winter evenings several neighbours frequently came to sit and spend an hour in friendly conversation with my father, and oftentimes upon religious subjects, according to their light. ~ To these I was very attentive, and when my hour for bed came, I would beg hard to sit a little longer, though I had not courage to urge the chief reason which induced me, namely, a desire to hear what might be said upon these subjects.

I remember one night in particular, many queries were proposed about salvation ; none of them thought it possible that any certainty could be attained in this life, whether they should be saved at last or not. But the general opinion was, that our actions would all be weighed in the day of judgment ; and if our good deeds over-balanced our bad ones, we should go to heaven ; but if the contrary, we should go to hell. But some dissented a little from this, and thought, nay, but God was merciful, and had sent his Son to die for sinners, and that their best way would be to amend their lives, and do all they could, and

Christ would make up the rest. One of these they all agreed must be the way ; and to confirm them in this conclusion, one observed that the parson of the parish was exactly of the same mind.

I endeavoured to satisfy myself with these determinations, but I could not. It was all, alas ! left at uncertainty ; and this would not do for one that was daily expecting a call to appear before the Judge of quick and dead.

However, I thought no way so likely to succeed, as to say my prayers regularly morning and evening, and be as careful as possible in refraining from bad words, especially from telling lies, playing on the sabbath-day, neglecting my book, quarrelling with my school-fellows, doing any thing I was taught to believe was wrong, or keeping company with such wicked boys as led me into the way of such temptations.

At eleven years of age I was called to bear a severe trial by the death of one of the tenderest and best of fathers. He had been subject for many years to what we call the heart-colic, and was often apparently near death. At such times, when every other hope seemed to fail, I used to get into a corner, fall down upon my knees, and there pray and weep, and wrestle with God to spare his life ; and though I knew not the Lord, yet I often felt a confidence that he heard me, and would grant my request ; and when I found it so, such gratitude and uncommon sweetness would rest upon my mind for many days as is better felt than expressed. However, he died at last of that disorder, after a few days' illness.

For some time I was quite inconsolable ; and had I been possessed of the whole world, I would gladly have given it all to have died with him, if I had been prepared. But as I knew I was not, I earnestly begged of my eldest brother (then upward of twenty) to tell me what I must do

to be saved ; believing as soon as I was ready for heaven, God would certainly take me, which was all that I wished for. But alas ! I gained no ground, for want (I believe) of proper instruction ; for as yet the light of the glorious gospel had not shined in that neighbourhood.

My father leaving no will, and his little property consisting chiefly of land, it fell of course to my eldest brother ; so that the family soon after became dispersed. I was removed to some distance among strangers, but I found favour in their sight, and was suffered to want for nothing. Here I got a new set of acquaintance, but equally destitute of the knowledge of God.

It pleased Him, however, whose ways are in the mighty waters, and his judgments in the great deep, to find means to teach me the knowledge of his salvation.

A wild young man, a few doors from where I lived, contrary to the will of his parents, and against the advice of all his friends, would go to sea : but he had not been there long before he was heartily weary, and ran away from his master. He was ashamed, however, to return home, and equally afraid of being known, as it was in the height of the French war, when the press was very hot. He therefore set out for some inland town, and took up his residence for some months in Northampton. Here the poor prodigal had time for reflection, and began to think on the mercies he had slighted in his father's house. By this strange chain of providences it was that he became acquainted with the Methodists, a small body of whom were in this place. He was invited by them, and afterward went constantly, to the preaching. His conscience being very soon thoroughly awakened, he readily joined their little society, and became a steady member.

After several months, he took courage, and wrote home to his friends. His father, always tender over him, was filled with joy to hear of his long-lost son ; and went to



the captain he had sailed with, got the indenture at a considerable expense, and the matter was made up ; which happy circumstance no sooner reached the young man, than he set off, and returned to his father's house with a glad heart.

His old acquaintance flocked to see him upon his arrival, and expected feasting, merriment, and, as they call it, great doings. But the tables were now turned. He began to exhort us all to, "flee from the wrath to come ;" enforcing the necessity of repentance and the new birth, stating that old things must be done away, and all things become new ; and he observed, that, instead of gluttony, drinking, singing, and dancing, we ought rather to fall upon our knees, and give God thanks for all his benefits.

His former companions gaped and stared at him as a monster ; and some of them came near him no more, swearing he was turned Methodist, that his brain was hurt, and that if they did not keep from him, he would convert them all, and make them as mad as himself. But these things had a very different effect upon me ; I looked upon him as some angelic being dropped from the clouds, and was affected in an extraordinary manner while he was speaking to the rest ; but as he took no notice of me, I concluded I was too vile for such a favourite of heaven to stoop to. I went away trembling and speechless, seeking a place to vent my grief in ; but it enhanced my misery, when I found that I could not weep ; for my heart seemed as black as hell, and as hard as a stone. I prayed again and again ; but, as I thought, to little purpose. However, I was clearly convinced that this was the way, and there was no other ; but then I thought it was impossible I should ever feel the happiness which that young man experienced, unless I could go to those people, and to that place where he found so blessed a change. I inquired what distance Northampton was, thinking to set

out unknown to any one, having a degree of confidence that God would take care of me ; but finding it was near two hundred miles, and not knowing one foot of the road, and being not yet fourteen years of age, I was quite discouraged ; and being no longer able to contain my sorrow, I begged one of the family with whom I resided to intercede for me with the young man, that he would only speak to me ; thinking that if he would take notice of such an unworthy creature, I should be one of the happiest of mortals. To my great surprise, he not only embraced the first opportunity of speaking to me, but seemed to rejoice over me as one that had found great spoil. This brought to my mind that scripture, " There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." And as it is with them, so I proved it to be with his people here.

From that time I date my acquaintance with the people of God, and to this day I have preferred them to all others. With what gratitude and delight have I often reflected upon and repeated those lines,—

" What a mercy is this,  
What a heaven of bliss;  
How unspeakably happy am I?  
Gather'd into the fold,  
With thy people enroll'd  
With thy people to live and to die!"

The first society I had intimacy with, was in Guisborough, a small market town in the north of Yorkshire, and about eight miles distant from where I lived. This was the nearest place where there was preaching ; and the road to it was not very good, as it lay over some mountains, and through several lonely woods, which were rendered more so on very dark winter evenings. But my need was such, that I never thought a moment on these discouragements. Sometimes I had company, at other times I had none ; but I do not remember that (when

business would permit) I ever neglected to go regularly once a fortnight, on (I think) the Tuesday evenings; and this was all the preaching we then had.

Some time after this, two or three of us began to think, if possible, of getting the preaching at the village where I lived. We spoke to the preachers, who appeared very willing to make a trial, and accordingly visited us occasionally a few times. The word was attended with power, and they soon joined about fifteen of us in a class, and afterward took us into their plan. We now thought ourselves highly honoured indeed. Our little number increased to about twenty; and then the enemy, who had hitherto been pretty quiet, began to show himself. His chief attack was upon the few united together to "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling." Against these he roared horribly. At our preachings and public meetings, the sons of Belial would assemble in a most shameless and tumultuous manner; but they were never permitted to hurt any one, although they spoke many great and swelling words.

Once while one of our friends was at prayer, and I and a few more were kneeling by him, a stout old woman, with vengeance in her countenance, advanced, having a sharp broad-axe, (such as carpenters hew wood with,) with many dreadful imprecations against the Methodists. She cursed horribly, and swore she would be the death of some one, if she was hanged for it the next hour. She stood a few seconds with her arms extended; no one offered to oppose her; but we prayed the more fervently, till, just as she appeared to be making a blow at the young man's head then at prayer, the axe fell to the floor, as if the use of her hands was perfectly taken away, and she retired as fast as she could into another room, still cursing the youth for being the ruin of her son and daughter; as she was sure those "false prophets" would never have

come there but for him ; and she did not know where it would stop, but was sure the devil would get them all. She used many such like expressions. Not long after this she was called to give up her accounts to God.

But these persecutions because of the word proved a sifting time ; and many, who countenanced the preaching at first, appeared by and by to have been mere “ stony-ground hearers.” Nay, even our own society was soon diminished to about twelve. These held out a few months, till the leader and his wife, with the man also who took in the preachers, were taken to Abraham’s bosom. The death of these three in so short a time as a few months was an awful visitation. Those of us that remained proving unfaithful, the candlestick was very soon after removed to another place. Two or three of us followed it, and continued for a little time ; but, by and by, our love also waxed cold.

Though I was now about fifteen years of age, I had never been able to say that my sins were forgiven. Nevertheless, my desires were strong, and often did the Lord give me a foretaste of his love ; but having no one near to speak to, the adversary gained an advantage over me. I gave way by little and little, and, my old companions soon observing me less grave and circumspect, began to solicit me to join with them as formerly. This I refused for a time, but not with the resolution and steadfastness I had done before ; so that they were encouraged to use other means of gaining me over. With what shame and sorrow of heart do I still reflect, that in a little time I joined them in parties of pleasure, and went from bad to worse, till I became tenfold more a child of hell than ever ! For, having once given way, my conscience became my constant tormentor day and night. I compared myself to that unhappy spirit, who, being cast out of his habitation, went about seeking rest, but found none.

Thus I continued for upward of two years, running as if in haste for damnation, with a lighted candle in my hand ; striving to stifle conscience with repeated acts of disobedience. The Spirit of God seemed for a time as if he had given me up, till I left the place I now had lived at upward of five years, and removed to another village called Newton-under-Ousbury, where was a small society of sincere Christians, with monthly preaching, a public meeting, and a class on the Lord's day. Here the Lord began to strive with me again ; but I fought against him, and still grieved his Holy Spirit.

I removed from thence to Stockton-upon-Tees. Upon my arrival here I began to reflect upon my folly ; conscience was awakened once more, and I obeyed its dictates so far as to join the society. But seeing my class-leader intoxicated with liquor, I was offended, and went near him no more.

After spending near one year in this place, I removed to Whitby in the year 1768, where was a large and flourishing society. I felt very unsettled and unhappy, till at last I resolved, God being my helper, to join that loving people. But then I thought I was too vile, and was greatly discouraged by reflecting on my repeated backslidings for upward of four years. I doubted whether I should ever stand long. However, my convictions increased, so that I could take no rest day or night, till I sent for that pious man, William Ripley. I expected that he would upbraid me with my past ingratitude to God and his people ; but he said not a word of this kind. No ; he saw me labouring under the weight of a wounded spirit, and the comfort he administered to me at that time was a cordial to my soul. Without asking me any questions, he fell upon his knees to write a note admitting me into the society ; which I received with a trembling hand, fearing that my poor unfaithful heart would again start aside as a

broken bow. But glory be to God, he was better to me than all my fears. In five days he blessed me with what I never knew before, namely, a clear sense of pardon. This was on February 6th, 1769, about ten o'clock in the evening. I believe that I might have received this years before, when under those first awakenings of the Spirit of God, had I fallen into the same hands; but the people I was first connected with, though very serious and devout, were less evangelical in their sentiments. I had still retained a notion that my repentance was not sufficient; that I must be much more in earnest, feel more terror, more sorrow, deeper convictions, &c.; before I could possibly attain a sense of pardon. This my friends in Whitby soon discerned, and told me that if God saw it necessary, he would deepen my convictions; but for me to pray for this, and to wait a little and a little longer, before I would dare to look for his favour, was the ready way to lose even the distress I then felt. They therefore told me that I must pray for nothing but a sense of the favour of God. Two of them one night vehemently urged me to embrace the promises by faith, assured me that all things were ready; and insisted that I must, that very night, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and I should certainly be saved. At first I thought them so wild in their notions, and withal so unreasonable in their demands, that I could scarcely refrain from being angry. My carnal nature spurned at it because I thought it as impossible for me to believe, as to pull the sun from the firmament. However, when they had talked to me thus for nearly two hours, I was exceedingly affected; and, trembling between hope and fear, I begged, in a degree of agony, that they would pray for me. Accordingly, we all fell on our knees. That zealous man of God, John Rogers, prayed first; and at every word he uttered my heart felt, and I firmly believed that God would grant him his heart's desire. In

that solemn moment, all the sufferings of Christ came to my mind. By the eye of faith I had as real a view of his agony on Calvary as ever I had of any object by the eye of sense. I saw his hands and his feet nailed to the cross; his head crowned with thorns; and his side pierced with the soldier's spear; with innumerable drops of blood falling from different parts of his body, and his face all covered therewith. But O, what a look was that! Such an inexpressible degree of approbation was communicated to my soul thereby, as I shall never forget. While I now recollect it, my overflowing heart and eyes almost forbid my proceeding. In that moment my burden was gone; my heart was brought out of bondage into glorious liberty; and the love which I felt for God and all mankind was inexpressibly great. I was constrained to cry, with David, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." I seemed as if I had never known happiness till now, and could hardly think it possible that I should learn war any more.

"I rode on the sky,  
Freely justified I,  
Nor envied Elijah his seat;  
My soul mounted higher,  
In a chariot of fire,  
And the moon it was under my feet."

I now went about among my old acquaintance, with a confidence that they would all repent and be converted if they knew how ready Christ was to save them. Some I found willing to hear what I had to say; others stared at me as one quite out of my senses. However, as nothing discouraged me, if I found them unwilling to let me pray with them, I used to fall on my knees in the midst of the floor, and praise God for what he had done for me, and pray that he would let them see their wants, and give

them all to experience the same blessing which I enjoyed. It pleased God to work powerfully at that time, especially among the young people ; many of whom came from a considerable distance to hear the word. I and some others had great delight in accompanying them on their way home. Nor can I reflect on those seasons without singular pleasure, when we sung the praises of God as we walked along, and when we kneeled down in the fields, or on the sea-shore, and commended each other to the grace of God. This was in the twentieth year of my age.

About this time the Lord raised up several witnesses of entire sanctification, whose daily walk and conversation did honour to their profession. With some of these I often conversed, and they would frequently speak of the blessedness of this salvation from inbred sin. I did not fully understand them at first, but thought I was as happy as I could be ; nor did I know that I wanted any thing which I had not received. However, not many days after this, being closely tempted, I was convinced that, though the guilt of sin was all done away, yet there were in me the remains of an evil nature ; that, though I was happy in a sense of acceptance, and had power also over inward and outward sin, yet the fountain of corruption was not dried up ; that I had yet a degree of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. And had I not been told that this is consistent with a state of justification, it is probable I should have cast away my confidence, as the enemy strongly suggested that my experience was all a delusion. The attack was severe while it lasted, for I reasoned with the temptation till my soul was in an agony ; but in my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he graciously heard me, and delivered me out of all my fears ; so that my evidence of pardon was more distinct and clear than ever. And as I believed the report, and cordi-



ally received the testimony of the happy few who professed entire sanctification, I felt strong desires awakened in my soul for that inestimable blessing ; and being daily urged by some of these to press after it, and to expect it every moment by faith alone, in a little time my thirst was such, that I could not rest, whatever place or company I was in.

“ My vehement soul cried out oppress'd,  
Impatient to be freed ;  
Nor could I, no, nor would I rest,  
Till I was free indeed.”

In reading the Scriptures I was more and more enlightened to see, and encouraged to hope for, deliverance from the root of sin. I saw there were given unto me exceeding great and precious promises, that I should be made a partaker of the divine nature ; and that the great end for which our Lord was manifested in the flesh, was “ to destroy the works of the devil, to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.” And I further perceived, that not only the promise of God, but his oath also, was given of old to his covenant people, “ that they should be delivered out of the hands of their enemies, that they might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life.”

From the manner in which this subject is introduced in the New Testament, I was led to infer two things. First, that the enemies there meant were our sins, especially the evils of our own heart. And, secondly, that the design of God is not to defer the destruction of these till death, or even to some little time before it, but that “ now is the accepted time ;” for he here declares, his will is, that we should serve him all the remaining part of our life in holiness, and without fear ; which St. John, in his First Epistle, iv, 18, says we cannot do until we are made first perfect in love.

Indeed, the whole Bible seemed calculated to raise my expectation of an answer to that prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And the more I contrasted the spirituality of the law with my own corrupt nature, the more eager were my desires.

At last I resolved neither to eat nor sleep till my desire was accomplished. I had no sooner made that resolution than I was tempted to reason upon the rashness of it. But such was the condescension of God, that he indulged my importunity, and granted my request. I went with a trembling heart to the very house where it had pleased him to shed abroad his pardoning love in my soul. That pious family no sooner learned my errand than they encouraged me to expect the blessing that hour; and exhorted me to believe on the Lord Jesus for full salvation. We then fell on our knees; and a good woman, one Mary Best, full of faith and love, wrestled and pleaded with the Lord for me. In less than fifteen minutes my burden was removed, and I felt an entire change, accompanied with a peculiar humbling sweetness; but not that rapturous joy I always thought attended that perfect liberty. On this account I was tempted much to reason; and, it is probable, the enemy would have wrested away my shield, but for the comforting interposition of my friends, who were not, like me, ignorant of Satan's devices. They told me it was a common case that a soul might be emptied of sin, and yet not filled with love till afterward; that the blessing of Christian perfection consisted in feeling I am nothing, and Christ is all in all. This I found true by experience, and therefore I was enabled henceforth to rejoice in a full assurance of this great salvation. In this glorious liberty I walked for, at least, three months; during which time, notwithstanding many fiery darts were shot at me, I could sing,—

“Not a cloud doth arise,  
To darken the skies,  
Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes.”

When I looked for those inward risings of anger, pride, and self-will, which, like dry tinder, were formerly ready to catch fire at any provocation, I found them not; but, on the contrary, I found meekness, humility, and resignation. I was so truly humbled with a sense of my own nothingness, that I rejoiced to suffer reproach for the name of Christ. That natural enmity to the pure law of God being now totally removed, his commandments became more joyous than ever; and I could say, in a sense that I never could before, “The law of God is in my heart, even the law of love.” I felt it the constraining principle, which led me to do and suffer the whole will of God. But, at the same time, I felt my ignorance and helplessness, together with the weakness and unworthiness which attended my best services; hence my daily cry was,

“Every moment, Lord, I want  
The merit of thy death.”

And, blessed be God! I felt it applied. Through faith in his blood I had constant access to the Father, through the Spirit; yea, and had fellowship with the Father and the Son by the Holy Ghost.

My love to God was accompanied with fervent desires for the salvation of immortal souls, and a conviction that I was called of God to preach the gospel. I thought if I could explain to others what I then felt, they would all repent and be converted. I was at this time at a considerable distance from my relations; and, as my first care was for their salvation, I could not rest till I reached my native place, being fully persuaded that I had a message from God unto them. I got a considerable number of my friends together; and, standing up for the first time in my father's house, faithfully warned them to flee from

the wrath to come. All seemed astonished, and some were much affected. But, alas! it was not as I expected. I did not find it such an easy matter to convert them from the error of their way as I imagined. I plainly saw this power belongeth unto God alone. However, it pleased him to give me some encouragement. For the second time I met them, while at the last prayer, the house was filled with groans and cries, till at length one exclaimed, (namely, my sister-in-law,) "Glory be to God! Glory be to God! He hath blessed me! He hath set my soul at liberty! I can praise him, and I will praise him! O praise God for me! Praise him! Praise him! Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord!" And so she went on for a considerable time.

This greatly encouraged me. But Satan seemed very unwilling that I should proceed, and therefore endeavoured to throw hinderances in my way. I then removed from the family I had been so much blessed with, to another, who, though they had much longer professed religion, yet were less alive to God. Here I fell into a snare, which brought my soul into great heaviness; for, parleying with temptation, I lost my confidence, and became almost distracted for a season.

About this time I had the following dream. I thought I was bitten by a large serpent; that I received a wound which I knew to be very dangerous; and that unavoidable death would ensue, if a speedy cure could not be effected. But where to go for it, I knew not. My hand was presently swelled to a prodigious size, and the poison seemed to spread very swiftly through my whole body. Observing this, I was in an agony of distress, when one told me of a physician at some distance, who alone could cure the bite of that serpent. On this, I determined to go to him immediately; but when I got to the door, I saw an innumerable multitude of serpents, through the midst of

which I must pass. My torture and perplexity being inexpressible, I turned into the house again. But reflecting that if I stayed here, death was the certain consequence, and that I could but die, if I went; and considering further, that if the physician could cure the first wound, he could also cure the rest; I resolved to push through them at all hazards, and so ran with all my might. I thought I got many bites more; yet none so bad as the first. At last, coming to the physician, he received me with kindness, and applied a balmy medicine, which immediately relieved my pain, and removed the inflammation. Yet still my distress was great, and I told him, "I dare not return back again; for the numerous serpents I have just passed through will again assault and wound me." But he bade me be of good courage, and anointed my whole body with the same balmy medicine, and said it would hinder them from wounding me, though they might assault me; but if they should wound me, he bade me return to him again. On this I thanked him, and with a grateful heart took my leave. When I came toward the serpents, I saw them with joy and surprise sunk back into holes in the earth, and only their heads peeping out, except a few who assaulted me, but had no power to hurt me. So I got safe to my mother's house.

By this dream I was persuaded that I ought to leave that family, and therefore resolved to do it without delay. I had no sooner fixed this determination, than a glimpse of hope was darted into my soul, and I saw that Jesus was the physician. Believing that he was both able and willing to heal my wound, I retired (as was my daily custom at that hour) to read and pray; when the Lord, instead of upbraiding me, applied the precious balm of his blood, and restored the joy of his salvation to my distressed soul. Taking my Bible, and lifting up my heart to heaven, I opened on the seventh chapter of St. John;

and coming to that passage, "Jesus stood up in that great day of the feast, and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" I shall never forget the manner in which these words were applied to my soul. It was as if the Lord Jesus Christ was standing before me in person, and actually speaking these words to me. If he had, it was not possible my assurance could have been greater that all my backslidings were healed.

" Stung by the scorpion sin,  
My poor expiring soul  
The balmy sound drank in,  
And was at once made whole;  
I saw my Lord upon the tree,  
And felt again he died for me."

I now left Whitby, and went to reside about five miles distant. Here Providence cast my lot with a most agreeable and happy family, and the Lord confirmed what he had wrought. The holy flame was such in my heart, that I went to the neighbouring villages, and, especially every Lord's day, stood in the open streets to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. I met with some discouragements, especially from old dry professors, who concluded I ran too fast to run long; but in less than six months it pleased God to raise a society in Lythe, a village about a mile distant. We procured a comfortable place to preach in, and the Lord added daily to our number. We then solicited the travelling preachers to visit us, and soon after they gave us one night in a month.

The enemy had often strove to prevent the gospel from taking root in that wicked place; but now, seeing the word mightily prevail, notwithstanding all his stratagems, he raged with redoubled fury. Some ruffians combined to prevent my preaching; and were determined some way or other to carry their point. As I was not afraid of man, and the few whom God had raised up were resolved to stand by me, we regarded not their threats.

After they had often disturbed us in our preaching-house, one night these sons of Belial collected all their forces, and assembled at the door to attack us as we came out. Their number was great, and I had no sooner dismissed the people, than they began the assault. Hearing this, I pushed forward from the pulpit, and got into the midst of them. They saluted me with volleys of oaths, and showers of stones and dirt, and in less than two minutes fell to blows. One of the stoutest of them advanced, with eyes full of fury, and made several strokes at my head, but I received them upon my left arm, which, by this means, was much bruised. When he could not bring me to the ground, he was enraged ; and watching his opportunity, while I endeavoured to rescue one of my friends whom they were beating, he came behind, and gave me such a blow on my right temple, that I staggered like a drunken man. My hat fell off, and my senses were greatly confused ; so that I must have fallen had he followed his blow. This doubtless he would have done ; but in that moment a young girl, who had lately been awakened and had joined our society, thinking I was much hurt, instantly took up a stone, about two pounds weight, and threw it at his back. He then left me, to revenge himself upon her ; and indeed she suffered dreadfully : for he took up a stone, equally large, and threw it with such violence in her face, that she fell to the ground, and lay motionless. She was supposed to be dead, and was carried home to her mother's house. However, it pleased God that she recovered ; yet she was cut in the most dreadful manner, having her cheek laid open to the bone ; and she will bear this mark of suffering for her Lord's sake to her dying hour. Others of our friends were hurt. One, in particular, had his face almost covered with blood ; and his coat, waistcoat, and shirt torn half way down his back. It is probable we might have come worse off still, had not God taken our

part; for, "as the stars in their courses fought against Sisera," so the Lord struck our enemies with terror, by sending, in that very moment, dreadful flashes of lightning from a cloud, which seemed to burst over their guilty heads. Finding an opportunity, while they were terrified, we endeavoured to escape; but retreated gradually, as some of our people were old and infirm, and we were not willing to leave them in the rear, lest they should become a prey. The next day we found means to bring some of the ringleaders to justice, and they disturbed us no more.

Having spent almost two years among these my first children in the gospel, though I loved them as my own soul, I was not easy in my mind to be shut up in one place, and that a small one. I therefore set out on foot upon a journey of about one hundred miles in circumference, preaching wherever I found a door open.

In this journey I met with some difficulties; nevertheless, my encouragements more than counterbalanced them. Among several others, one thing was as pleasing as remarkable. An old man came to hear preaching at Wingate, a small village near Sunderland; and was deeply convinced of sin. He went home with trembling and terror, and could not sleep till he had found a clear sense of pardon. Being filled with joy unspeakable, he communicated this to his wife, with whom he had lived upward of fifty years. She was exceedingly affected with the relation of what God had wrought in him; and wished to go the next evening with him, and hear for herself. When she came and heard, she was deeply convinced; and returning home, she asked her husband if he thought God would give her the same blessing which he had obtained. The old man, full of faith, cried, "O yes! all things are ready. You may have it this night; he hath saved me, who am the greatest sinner." Being encouraged at this, they agreed to pray together alternately, confident that



God would bless her also, even that very night. They continued wrestling, Jacob-like, till after four in the morning, and had no answer. Though their strength was much exhausted with praying so long, being both upward of fourscore years of age, and, consequently, very infirm, yet they would not give up; and the Lord soon after condescended to grant her request, and to speak her sins forgiven. What a fulfilment of that promise, "If two of you shall agree on earth touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them!" And what encouragement for poor sinners of every age, that these two, even at the eleventh hour, were not rejected by the Lord of the harvest!

This journey, being in the depth of winter, the weather severe, and some of my lodgings not very comfortable, was the cause of a long and dangerous illness, the relics of which settled in my left hand, which gathered and broke in several places. The whole habit of my body was brought so low, that I was thought by most who saw me to be in a deep consumption; indeed, I fully expected that I should not recover, and was greatly rejoiced at the prospect of being so soon with Him whom my soul loved. Nevertheless, for his sake I was willing to live, if thereby I might bring glory to his name.

I continued in this weak state of body for upward of two years. Yet I laboured as much as my health would permit for some months on the Hull circuit. In the year 1772, one of the preachers appointed for York going to America, Mr. Wesley wrote to me to take his place; which I did. And I continued on that circuit until my strength was so exhausted that I could travel no longer. I was then advised by Mr. Bruce, a medical gentleman in York, to use the cold bath. And in preference to all others he recommended Ilkley-Wells, a place near Otley, in the west riding of Yorkshire. Before I had been

there a week, I felt the good effects of it; and I am fully persuaded that, under God, that water was the means of saving my life. After using it constantly for about three months, in October, 1773, I went to Thirsk, and, at the request of many kind friends, spent my winter there; where I employed the little strength God had graciously restored to me, and, I trust, not without some fruit of my labour.

In May, 1774, although I had no relapse in my disorder, it was thought advisable that I should return to Ilkley-Wells for a while, to confirm my cure. I did so, and continued in that neighbourhood till August. I now thought myself able to take a circuit again, and therefore at the Bristol conference that year I was appointed to labour with Mr. Duncan Wright, at Thirsk. I was truly thankful for such a fellow-labourer; for he acted the part of a father to me. We had the hearts of the people, and the Lord added many seals to our ministry.

In the year 1775 I was received into full connection, and appointed at the Leeds conference for Edinburgh; where I had for my colleagues T. R. and R. W., two faithful men, whose hearts were in the work. The people soliciting our stay another year, Mr. R. and I were permitted to remain, and Mr. M'N. was appointed with us. But though we laboured in love and harmony both with each other and among the people, yet very little fruit appeared at the end of two years. We had found two hundred and sixty members in the Edinburgh circuit; we joined upward of two hundred more; and yet, in the end, left only two hundred and forty-five, that is, fifteen less than we found. So fluctuating was that people! Nevertheless, we have a few steady, faithful, hospitable friends in Scotland.

I should probably have stayed longer in that kingdom, had my health permitted. What injured my constitution a second time was, a journey which I took to the Isle of

Bute. It is eighteen miles long, and in most parts about three or four broad; situate about forty miles from Glasgow; its inhabitants in general speak the Erse language; few understand English. Being invited by one of the natives, a well-wisher to religion, I was resolved to give them a trial. We had about twenty miles to go by water; and in the second voyage I made, just after we put to sea, a dreadful storm arose. The boatmen were so foolhardy as not to put back again; and, the wind being nearly right a-head of our vessel, they were obliged to tack most of the way. The women passengers and the children began to shriek and cry dreadfully, so that the sailors were obliged to put them all below, and to fasten down the hatches. The place was small, and the people so numerous, that I expected they would be suffocated; but there was no alternative. The rest drank so much whiskey, that I feared there would not be men enough sober to work the vessel. They pressed me to partake with them; but I could not taste. No; I had other work; looking every moment when the vessel would fill, and overset, as part of it was an open boat. The rain and hail were very heavy from the clouds; and the sea also breaking over us, I had nothing left dry about me. Thus I sat, or stood, without any shelter, for twelve or fourteen hours, exposed to the whole, while the water ran out of my shoes. But, contrary to our fears, it pleased God at last to bring us safe to the haven where we would be.

Having no clothes to shift me, I went straight to the inn where I had slept before; intending to go immediately to bed, as my only resource, to prevent a fit of sickness; but, to my great disappointment, a gentleman's family, who had been detained by the same storm, had possession of my lodgings. In about two hours, an old man, hearing of my situation, came and gave me a kind invitation to his little cottage. I gladly accepted his friendly offer;

and hastening home with him, put off my wet clothes ; but my bed being raised only about twelve inches from a damp earthen floor, and there being no fire, it was not quite so comfortable as my condition then required ; especially as the coverings were not warm, being nearly worn out. The consequence was, in a few hours I found my throat exceedingly inflamed, and a burning feverish heat through my whole frame ; so that I had little hope of ever seeing the main land again. It was also impracticable to send for any of my friends, because of the weather ; yet, blessed be God, I was not friendless ; for that Friend that sticketh closer than a brother did not leave me, neither forsake me. He who filleth the vast immensity of space with his presence, can never be distant from those who hope in his mercy ; nor can he fail to deliver them in the time of need. I have reason to speak thus ; for such was his goodness, that without any human assistance, use of medicine, or any comforting cordial, (save that of the love of Christ,) in a few days I was able to go out again. But I was then hard put to it for food ; and having nothing that I could relish, I employed a poor woman to gather me a kind of shell-fish, about half the size of cockles, which was my chief support till I was able to return to the main land. After this I remained some months in Glasgow and Edinburgh ; but did not recover my health for a long time.

In the year 1777 I was appointed to labour in the east of Cornwall. A journey of about five hundred miles was no small fatigue in my then weak state of body ; but the Lord was with me. I looked upon it as his doing, therefore set out in his name, and found sweet communion with him in the way.

I had long desired to converse with that great and good man, Mr. Fletcher ; and now an opportunity offered itself. Stopping at Bristol for a few days to rest myself and

horse, I heard of his being at Mr. Ireland's, about three miles off, in a poor state of health, and with two of my brethren took a ride to see him. When we came there, he was returning from a ride, which he was advised by his physician to take every day. Dismounting from his horse, he came toward us with arms spread open, and eyes lifted up to heaven. His apostolic appearance, with the whole of his deportment, amazingly affected us.

The first words he spoke, while yet standing in the stable by his horse, were a part of the sixteenth chapter of St. John, most of which he repeated. And while he pointed out the descent of the Holy Ghost, as the great promise of the Father, and the privilege of all New-Testament believers, in a manner I never had heard before, my soul was dissolved into tenderness, and became even as melting wax before the fire.

As an invidious report had been spread that he had recanted what he had lately written against Calvinism, in those excellent writings of his, entitled his "Checks," &c., I took the liberty to mention the report, and asked him what he thought had given rise to it. He replied, he could not tell; except that he had refrained from speaking on controverted points since he came to Mr. Ireland's; partly by reason of the poor state of his health, and because he did not wish to grieve his kind friend, by making his house a field of controversy; but assured us he had never yet seen cause to repent of what he had written in defence of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Minutes. And though he believed his close application was the means of reducing his body to the state in which we then saw it, yet if he fell a victim, it was in a good cause.

After a little further conversation upon the universal love of God in Christ Jesus, we were about to take our leave, when Mr. Ireland sent his footman into the yard with a bottle of red wine, and some slices of bread upon a

waiter; we all uncovered our heads while Mr. Fletcher craved a blessing upon the same; which he had no sooner done, than he handed first the bread to each, and then lifting up his eyes to heaven pronounced those words: "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." Afterward, handing the wine, he repeated in like manner: "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c. But such a sacrament I never had before. A sense of the divine presence rested upon us all; and we were melted into floods of tears. His worthy friend, Mr. Ireland, grieved to see him exhaust his little strength by so much speaking, took him by the arm, and almost forced him into the house; while he kept looking wishfully, and speaking to us, as long as we could see him. We then mounted our horses and rode away. That very hour more than repaid me for my whole journey from Edinburgh to Cornwall.

When I came to Plymouth-Dock I found a lively and loving society. My heart clave to them. My fellow-labourers and I had a very agreeable year together upon that circuit, and some good was done. My health also was much restored.

In 1778 I was appointed to labour in Kent. It was the first year of the grand encampment upon Cox-Heath; which consisted of about fifteen thousand men. Being only at the distance of half a mile from the Heath, for two or three weeks before I entered upon my circuit, I generally preached in the camp once a day. I have reason to believe some of the seed then sown was not lost, having since met with persons both in England and Ireland who testified they had cause to thank God for the few opportunities they then enjoyed. How often is that word fulfilled, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days!"

On December 4th I was married to Miss Martha Knowlden, a young woman of a worthy family in Loose, near Maidstone, with whom, by a wonderful chain of providences, I became acquainted about three years before at Edinburgh. She was brought up a dissenter, and feared the Lord from her infancy; and was often comforted and sweetly drawn by the love of God into a patient waiting for Christ. But she never had a clear sense of pardon till some time after she joined the Methodist society. About four years after she found peace with God, and near one year after our marriage, she became more acquainted with the deep things of God than before; inbred sin was removed by sanctifying grace, and the perfect love of God was shed abroad in her heart. Her great modesty and diffidence would not let her say much; but all her words, works, and tempers, showed what great things the Lord had done for her soul. One striking part of her conduct among many others I would mention here, recommending it to the imitation of all, especially to those of her own sex. When any thing of a trying nature happened in the society, while others would have been talking over and repeating grievances, her method always was, to retire immediately for secret prayer, where she usually left her burden with the Lord. She was of few words; no tattler, no busy-body, but a keeper at home. She carefully refrained from speaking evil of any one; but when any had used her unkindly, or caused pain to her mind, she bore it in silence, and recommended them to God in prayer. She would never dispute with any one. While she lived, her whole deportment was an unspeakable blessing to me. And in her death she gave testimony of God's power to save to the uttermost them that come to him through Christ Jesus.

In the year 1779 I was appointed to labour at Leeds, where I found a people ripe for the doctrine of holiness;

and many that year believed unto full salvation. This was the richest soil for Methodism I had yet known. We found two thousand two hundred members in society, and about twenty local preachers, who greatly assisted us in the work; and the word of the Lord ran and was glorified; to which the harmony which subsisted between the preachers, stewards, leaders, and people, greatly contributed.

In the year 1780 I went to Sheffield, where I found a large society, but less united than those I had left; and therefore I was not so comfortable for a time as I could wish. It grieved me also that one of my fellow-labourers did not lovingly draw in the same yoke, and soon after left the connection. The uneasiness occasioned in the society by his disaffection, for some months, threatened us with disagreeable consequences; and our enemies expected a considerable division among us: but "He that sitteth above the water-floods" found means to prevent it. So that instead of losing in our number, we found at the end of the year an increase of ninety-seven members.

In the latter end of June, Mr. Wesley, according to his usual tour, came to Sheffield, where Mr. Bradford, who then travelled with him, was taken very ill, and was obliged to desist. I took his place for about six weeks; but I soon found my constitution was inadequate to the task. Being much fatigued with riding in the heat, which was very intense at that time, I was seized with a bilious complaint the first day the conference began at Leeds. Doctor Hamilton, with other physicians, paid every attention to my case, which appeared very doubtful for some days. The chief means whereby I found relief were bleeding and the warm bath; but it was some time before I was pronounced out of danger. I here learned some useful lessons while under my Father's rod; he gave me peace and resignation when my pain was most extreme,



and during my whole confinement I do not know that I had one murmuring thought. After my recovery, I felt a degree of gratitude which I had not known before; and a resolution fixed in my heart, to be more devoted to God, and zealous for the good of souls than ever.

I was appointed to labour another year in Sheffield, and was highly favoured with the assistance of two good young men. We laboured together in harmony, had peace in all our borders, and the work of God greatly prospered. Many souls were awakened and born of God, and one hundred and forty were added to the society.

In the year 1782 I was appointed for Macclesfield. As the circuit was large and unwieldy, four preachers were sent, with instructions to divide it. We did this in the best manner we could; and my worthy colleague, Mr. Myles, took charge of the Burslem division. But this, with some other amendments, such as furnishing the preachers' dwelling-house by subscription, changing the stewards, &c., gave deep offence to a few individuals; but the hearts of the people were united to their preachers; and notwithstanding all the difficulties we met with, we were greatly comforted among them, and at the end of two years I had the satisfaction of leaving them considerably increased in number; and I trust, upon the whole, not less alive to God than I found them.

But all the trials I had ever known were small when compared with that which I was here called to bear. After a lingering sickness of about two months' continuance, the Lord saw it right to tear from my bleeding heart the dear partner of my cares and sorrows, my ever faithful and affectionate wife.

As it so nearly concerns myself, and will probably be a blessing to some into whose hands these pages may fall, I shall make no apology for inserting a part of what passed during her last sickness.

It was on new-year's day that her danger began first to appear. After the renewal of the covenant, it was impressed deeply upon my mind, that her sickness would be unto death. Being greatly distressed on her account, I went to her, and told her my fears for her. She replied, with her usual sweetness, "Perhaps my life may not be in danger. You can remember the time when I was reduced much lower than I am now, and yet the Lord restored me. He bringeth down to the grave and raiseth up again. The Lord can do great things. Nay, he hath done great things. Fear not, and all shall be well."

Jan. 7th.—She still continued to grow weaker. Besides many other things which passed in conversation concerning her past life, and the dealings of God with her soul, she said to me, "What pleasure should it afford us, my dear, that we can look back on the five years we have lived together, and say, we have been helps and not hinderances to each other in the ways of God! And what cause have you, as well as I, to be happy in the reflection, that we have never had one jarring string since we knew each other; that, notwithstanding, we have had many trials from others, yet we have never been the least cause of sorrow to each other! And if the Lord should take me now, you will follow me, but not yet. No, my dear, you have more to do and to suffer; but He who has hitherto supported will still be your helper. You will live to be more useful, and more happy than ever. The Lord knows you are upright before him, so that you have nothing to fear. He will lay underneath you his everlasting arms; therefore go on, and let nothing discourage you. I believe the Lord will prosper what you take in hand, and that he will bless the children, and make them his children. You may be discouraged to think how you shall do with them when I am gone; but you need not. The Lord will raise you up friends where you do not expect,

and you shall want for nothing ; and what is best of all, I shall meet you in glory."

In the evening she desired the children, Joseph and Benjamin, might be brought to her bedside. She kissed them both, and prayed that the blessing of Jacob's God might ever attend them ; and then added, " I believe God will bless you, and make you a blessing to many. I believe he will make you good men, and you will one day follow me to heaven."

14th.—A part of the morning she was scarcely able to speak at all ; but her mind seemed quite composed, and a heavenly sweetness was in her countenance. I prayed with her, and afterward being seated by her, she burst suddenly into tears. On being asked the cause, she said, " O, it is happiness that makes me weep. I am thinking of Jesus, and how his name charms all the heavenly host, and the thought is almost overcoming. O, he is a precious Saviour ! I have many relations in heaven, who are near and dear unto me ; a father, a mother, and sisters, and brothers, and others whom I loved tenderly : but they are all nothing when I think of Jesus ; and I shall soon see him and praise him better than I can now. Angels will be blessed companions above ; but O, they are nothing ; I can only think of Jesus. My sweet Saviour, I do love thee ! Where is that hymn that speaks of Jesus as the subject of all the angels' songs ?" The hymn was read, though with many tears, while she seemed to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

On the same day Mr. Joseph Roe called to see her, and being desired to walk up stairs into her room, she said to him, " The Lord favours me, Mr. Roe, in a peculiar manner. I have no pain ; and after all my unworthiness, he gives me sweetly to rejoice in his love, on a sick and dying bed. His condescension is so great, that, at times, a sense of it almost overpowers me. He is a precious

Saviour, indeed he is ; and those that cleave to him with a sincere heart will ever find him so. He knows I am sincere, though very undeserving ; and all I have ever feared, or that has harassed my mind, has been a concern lest others should think me more than I am. I would not deceive any one by professing more than I possess ; the Lord knoweth. No ; it would be an awful thing to do that. I would be sincere. It is good to be sincere. We shall all find it so when we come to a death-bed. I could wish we might all live to God more than we have ever done. What is the world or any thing in it ? Jesus is all ; and I shall praise him for ever, I know I shall." While she spoke these words, she seemed to be in an ecstasy of joy and praise. Her sparkling eyes and outspread arms made her to appear as if she were even now about to take her flight to her immortal home.

In the evening she called upon us to sing,

"He comes, he comes, the Judge severe ;"

and she sung the whole hymn with us so loud, that all were amazed, and much affected.

18th.—She had a violent fit of coughing, and nature seemed in agonies. I said to her, "My dear, this is hard work." She turned her languid face toward me, and said with a heavenly smile upon her countenance, "No, my dear, it is not. No, no, it is not hard. Jesus makes it sweet ; he suffered much more for me. I should be ungrateful if I thought it hard, or if I had a murmuring thought. I am sensible it is the Lord's goodness to me, and am thankful for it. My mind is composed, and I am sure all will be well."

19th.—This was a happy day to her. While I stood by the bedside, she looked at me, and said, "The Lord will bless you, my dear. He will bless you. What cause have I to be thankful for the day I first knew you ! But for you I might have been cast into the way of a gay

world ; but the Lord made you the instrument of snatching me from it. I hope I shall be one diamond more in your crown, and shall praise God to all eternity for you. Go on, my dear, and the Lord will be with you."

23d.—George Pearson called to inquire after her, and by her desire he was asked up stairs. She gave him her hand and said, " Well, well, George, I am glad to see you. I love to see the Lord's children, and I believe you are one. You have known the ways of God a long time. The Lord has done much for you. Yes, he has blessed you, and he will bless you still. He is a good and faithful God. I have ever proved him so, and especially in this time of need. He does bless me, and comfort me, and will save me to the end. I believe you have had many trials since you first set out in the ways of God. You now draw near the end of your journey. You will not forsake the Lord now, and I am sure he will not forsake you. No, no ; the Lord forsakes not his people. You see he does not forsake me, unworthy as I am." He prayed with her, and her mind was much encouraged.

Some time after this, she called the maid to her, and said, " Phœbe, be sure you be a good girl. Serve the Lord : give him your heart. Religion is the best thing, Phœbe. Nothing else will do. Be truly religious, and then you will be fit to live, and fit to die. O, it is a blessed thing to be devoted to God in our youth. Do not forget what I say. I am dying. You may live many years, or you may follow me soon : we cannot tell. The Lord knoweth. O think on these things ; do ; and then you will see me again in heavén."

24th.—Being asked how she felt, she replied, " Very comfortable. I feel the Lord is good to me. And notwithstanding all my unworthiness, I believe he will accept me ; nay, he does accept me. I know that Jesus is mine, and I am his ! I am indebted to his merit for all : I

am saved through Christ alone. I leave my every concern with him ; and I am sure he will keep that which I have committed to his care. My husband, my children, my friends, my every care I leave with Jesus. I fully believe he will preserve them all, and we shall meet above."

26th.—Being spent with coughing, when she had recovered a little, she said, " Well, but I know my reward is with the Lord, and my God will be my help. And, glory be to his blessed name ! I feel he doth help me. My trust is in the Lord ; he is near unto me at all times." And again, after a severe fit of sickness, and a sleepless night, she turned her face to Miss Roe, and said, " Well, my dear, I think the Lord will not tarry long now. O, he is a gracious Saviour ! We shall soon meet where we shall rejoice together for ever.

‘How shall we sing and triumph there,  
Our dangers and our escapes compare,  
Our days of flesh and wo !’

Yes, we shall, we shall."

She continued in a rapture of joy, as one just ready to take the wing, while Miss Roe repeated the following lines:—

“He looks from the skies,  
He shows us the prize,  
And gives us a sign  
That we shall o’ercome by the mercy divine,” &c.

For several days she was exceedingly weak, and could scarcely be heard to speak. At times, however, she whispered, “O my precious, precious Lord, thou wilt not tarry long ! I shall soon be with thee. What a day will that be ! I shall praise thee for ever. O what a sweetness, what happiness I feel ! I am quite resigned : entirely so. All that the Lord does is well done indeed ! I am glad it is just as it is ; all is right. Come, Lord Jesus ! O come quickly ! O come, my gracious Jesus ! do come and

help me! Thou wilt come soon. I shall soon be with thee."

Feb. 15th.—A little before three o'clock this morning she had a severe fit of coughing, and tried to get up the phlegm in vain. I said to her, "You have had a hard struggle, my dear; but this is also permitted by Him who loves you tenderly. Yes, you are dear to him. God has some good end to answer in thus lengthening out your affliction. But your Lord is now saying, It is enough! Only have faith and patience a few minutes longer, so shall you be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. You are this moment suffering all that you ever shall suffer to all eternity. You shall never, never, never suffer again! Methinks I hear Jesus now saying, Lo! I come quickly to wipe away all tears for ever from your eyes. It is done. Thou shalt sorrow no more, neither shalt thou feel any more pain!"

She replied, "These are precious words. They comfort me; and I believe it is all true, and I shall prove it so. Yes, I shall! I shall! I shall!" After that she lay composed about a quarter of an hour, silently breathing prayer and praise to God. Then the cough came on again, and a most severe struggle ensued, which threw her into the agonies of death. She was convulsed all over in a moment. While the agony was at the height, it was thought she was delirious. Just as it seized her, she cried, "Pray! pray! pray! O pray for me." We did so. The agony abated a little, and her reason returned. She instantly cried out with an uncommon vehemency, clasping her hands, "My God! My God! My Saviour! My King!" repeating it many times. I replied, "Yes, my dearest creature, your Saviour is coming to you; he is here. Jesus is now standing by, and his holy angels with him. They are all waiting for you. See! see! their wings are already spread out to bear you away." She cried out

with an uncommonly loud voice, "I know it! I know it well!" repeating the same words at least ten times over. She was then silent a little. When I could speak, I repeated to her those lines of Mr. Pope:—

"Hark, they whisper! angels say,  
Sister spirit, come away!"

telling her these her favourite verses were now completely fulfilled in her; that she was now in effect saying,—

"Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,  
And let me languish into life."

I was going on to the end of the verse; but just as I repeated,

"Heaven opens on my eyes!"

she stopped me short by crying out so loud as to be heard down stairs, and through every room in the house, "See! see! see! What a fine man! See! see! see! What a fine man!" The scene was very affecting. In that dread moment such a solemn awe fell upon all those about her, as if the Lord Jesus Christ was visibly present. From the uncommon vehemence and unshaken confidence with which she had just before used the prayer of her dying Lord, "My God! my God!" we had not a doubt, but as she was then drinking of the cup of sorrow, after the example of her Lord, (for she was bathed all over in a cold sweat,) so in like manner was an angel sent, or Jesus himself appeared, to strengthen her in her last agony.

She continued with her eyes fixed, repeating the same words, "See! see! see! What a fine man!" for fifteen or twenty minutes, without intermission, till her strength was quite exhausted. Then with a lower voice she cried, "Come, come, come! Saviour, Saviour! come, come, come!" And gently leaning back, she sweetly sunk into his arms, at half past five o'clock on Sunday morning, February 15th; having just seen her birth-day, and ended



her twenty-ninth year in a world of sorrow, she began with her Lord in paradise that sabbath which shall have no end. My youngest son, a lovely child, died at the same time, aged eight months ; and they were both laid in one grave.

I was now left with my two little boys, one four, the other only two years old. But the Lord was merciful both to them and me, who in the course of his providence raised us up a kind friend in Miss Roe, the only daughter of the late Rev. James Roe, of Macclesfield, an intimate acquaintance, and twin soul of their dear mother ; and for whom both they and I have had cause to be thankful ever since.

As I clearly perceived the Lord had prepared in her another help-meet for me, and one every way calculated to assist me both in my soul and labours, I therefore entered into the marriage state a second time on August 19th, 1784. And now that eight years are nearly elapsed, I have found no cause to alter my judgment, but, on the contrary, have often blessed God for such a yoke-fellow. And it has pleased the Lord to make her useful in her present calling to many, especially those of her own sex. She was in some measure prepared for this, not only by a pious and liberal education from her childhood, but by an early conversion to God. She was deeply awakened, and brought to the saving knowledge of Christ at the age of seventeen ; and a short time after that felt the need of a further work of grace. For this she earnestly entreated the Lord, who soon came to her help.

“He spoke the second time, ‘Be clean,’  
And took away her inbred sin.”

From that time, (now eighteen years ago,) though variously tempted and tried in common with others, she has held fast her confidence in God. And from the time I

first had the happiness of becoming acquainted with her, I have seen nothing in her conduct inconsistent with her profession. The evenness of her temper, and the cheerfulness of her disposition, as well as her faith and prayers, have greatly contributed to my comfort, when closely exercised and tried from different quarters. She was certainly the especial gift of God to me. And I have not the shadow of a doubt but we shall, after a few more conflicts here, follow her who is gone before, and all spend a glorious eternity together in recounting the wonders of Providence and of grace.

Immediately after our marriage, we hastened to my appointment in Dublin, where we safely arrived, in a Liverpool packet, after an agreeable passage of thirty hours.

I had not been many days in that city before I saw some fruit of my labour, and was fully satisfied that my going there was of the Lord. A few years ago there had been a sifting time in the society. But the troublers of Israel were now removed, and we found the people fully prepared to receive the gospel of peace. Within the space of six weeks several found mercy, and returned public thanks to Almighty God for a sense of his pardoning love; and many more were deeply awakened.

This we received as a token for good, and the hopes of all were encouraged to expect a more glorious outpouring of the Spirit. For this a general spirit of supplication was given, and the Lord answered for himself in a wonderful and glorious manner. At the quarterly love-feast, Sunday, Oct. 10th, (the first we kept together,) soon after the people began to speak their experience, a poor woman under deep conviction cried aloud for all present to pray for her. We all instantly fell upon our knees, and entreated the Lord on her behalf. In that moment the power of God descended in such a manner, that I believe not

one unaffected soul remained under the roof. We continued wrestling in prayer for nearly half an hour, and afterward found not less than seven souls were clearly justified; and many who had received notes of admission on that occasion were deeply awakened, and immediately joined the society. The next evening another was justified under the word, and two more under the last prayer, when also a poor backslider felt that the Lord had healed him. Within the next week following, five others were brought into gospel liberty; and in the month ensuing, thirteen more. At a love-feast held in our gravel-walk chapel, Nov. 18th, eight persons received a sense of pardon, two backsliders were restored, and a stranger, who had got admittance for that time, was truly awakened. About a fortnight after this, we had our band love-feast, when two more were justified, and three professed to be at the same time renewed in love. In the beginning of December, one was justified at St. Patrick's church when receiving the sacrament; and one who had been educated a Roman Catholic, but was awakened about six weeks before, received a sense of pardon under the word in our preaching-house; as did two more, who were convinced of sin at one of the above-mentioned love-feasts.

On Christmas-day our chapel at Whitefriars was well filled at four o'clock in the morning. We continued in preaching, exhortation, and prayer, till eight. It was a memorable season, and the power of God was manifest in the whole congregation. I cannot ascertain the exact number of souls that were converted to God, but several found a clear sense of his pardoning love shed abroad in their hearts; and many others were awakened, who had remained until that time entire strangers both to God and his people.

The first Sunday in the new year all the society, with several other friends, assembled together to renew their

covenant with God. It was a most solemn season. I seldom remember to have felt more of the divine presence at any time. The language of my heart, and I believe of most present, was, "How awful is this place! Surely it is the house of God: this is the gate of heaven." So it was found to be; three penitents, and two backsliders, were at that blessed ordinance reconciled to God by faith in the blood of Christ. And on the Thursday and Friday evenings following, while the form of the covenant was further explained, four more received forgiveness of sins; and two others under the preaching on the ensuing sabbath.

From that time to the twenty-fifth of March, thirty-six more received a sense of pardoning mercy. On Good-Friday two more were justified under the word, and one at the communion in St. Patrick's. On Easter-day many could witness, "Christ is risen indeed." Two received a sense of pardon in the morning, and in the evening four more felt the power of Him who bruised the head of the serpent, while attending to a sermon delivered from Genesis iii, 15; and, besides these, three others were blessed with a degree of inward liberty they had not known before. We had reason to hope our honoured father, Mr. Wesley, would have spent his Easter with us, but being detained in England longer than he expected, he did not arrive in Dublin until April 11th; before which time three more were pardoned; two backsliders were restored; and two others experienced the great truth, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Mr. Wesley spent about a fortnight in the city; during which time eight persons were justified under his preaching; and before he returned from visiting the country societies, fifteen souls found peace with God.

In the time of our conference, two others received a sense of pardon, and three more were enabled to believe

to full salvation. The whole number of souls brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, in the course of the year past, was a hundred and thirty; and an increase in the society of two hundred members, after excluding all those whom we judged improper to remain.

When I found my fellow-labourer was to be removed, I made it matter of much prayer to God, that he would send me another suitable in every respect. The Lord fulfilled my desire, and gave me Christopher Peacock; a man every way adapted to the work, who was also my son in the gospel of Christ, and for whom I had a most tender affection. He was a laborious, zealous young man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and his ministry was attended with abundant success. But it pleased Him who seeth not as man seeth, and “whose judgments are a great deep,” early to deprive us of this valuable man of God! A putrid fever was commissioned to snatch him away (perhaps from some evil to come) in the midst of his usefulness, and the full vigour of youth. He finished his course February 15th, 1786, in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

The affliction and death of one I loved so much, with what I felt for the people in losing such a helper, so greatly affected my bodily health, that, for some weeks, I thought I must have sunk under the burden. Application was made to Mr. Wesley to fill up the vacancy, but in vain, as all the preachers were engaged. This was an awful period; and I greatly feared the glorious revival, which we were now in the very midst of, would at least be impeded. But the death of a preacher so much beloved had a good effect upon the people; we cried to the Lord, and he was better to us than all our fears; and, great as my fatigue was, my health grew better; so did the Lord perfect his strength in human weakness. I was led to consider this was the Lord’s work, and that he could carry it on with or without means, or by what instruments

he chose. The congregations continued very large, and the prayer-meetings and classes exceedingly lively; and scarcely a week passed in which some were not awakened and joined to the society; and frequently under the word, or at other ordinances, three, four, or five, would be found to praise God for his converting grace. And although they were amazingly happy in the love of Christ, yet there was scarcely any appearance of what is commonly called wildfire; and the work was not only gradual, but deep in most of those who were the subjects of it. The number of persons whom we had reason to believe were savingly brought to the knowledge of God among us, in the course of the second year, was one hundred and seventy-eight souls, which is forty-eight more than in the former year; and the society amounted to more than nine hundred members.

Having had so considerable an increase, and for so long a time together, it was natural to expect, according to the common course of things, the tide would now begin to ebb. But He who is able to do above all that we can ask or think still continued to awaken sinners in great numbers. Zion's cords were lengthened, and her converts flowed in from every quarter. Several concurring circumstances induced Mr. Wesley to comply with the request of the society in leaving me among them another year; and I was favoured with a fellow-labourer of piety, integrity, and good abilities; nor did the Lord give us less fruit than before. When we came to deliver up our charge at the yearly conference, after thoroughly weeding the classes, and lopping off one hundred and twenty-six members, some for immorality, and others for omitting to meet their class, yet the society had increased to eleven hundred and thirty-six: which made in all an addition of above six hundred souls in three years; and from the best accounts we could keep, we had every reason to believe,

four hundred and fifty-eight of these were savingly converted to God.

In the year 1787 I was stationed for Cork. But before I could enter upon my new appointment, some temporal matters rendered it necessary that I and my wife should first go to Macclesfield. The journey appeared more pleasing, as we were honoured with the company of Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke, and others of our preachers and their wives, across the Channel. But although the passage in general was agreeable, yet it was attended with some danger. When we had gone about half way from Dublin to Parkgate, the packet, borne down by a rapid tide from the Welsh coast, suddenly struck upon a rock, where we lay beating vehemently for about an hour. The captain ordered all the women and children upon deck, to try if we could save their lives, expecting every minute the ship would go to pieces. But through the kind providence of God, and after fervent prayer to him for deliverance, it pleased the Lord to interpose in our behalf, so that we got clear again, though not without some damage to the vessel. However, the pump was sufficient to keep it up, till we reached the port.

Having settled our affairs, we hastened back to Dublin, and from thence to Cork, where, after a journey of nearly seven hundred miles, to and fro by sea and land, we were gladly received by an affectionate people, who were studious to make our lives comfortable. Some unhappy jarings the preceding year had considerably injured the work of God, so that in visiting the classes, I found, about three weeks after I arrived, the society reduced from five hundred to three hundred and ninety-seven members. My fellow-labourer was a pious man and a good preacher; and we had the happiness to see peace and prosperity return. We added a hundred to the society before new-

year's day ; and have reason to believe upward of sixty of these were converted to God.

But the progress of the work did not stop here ; the Lord continued to prosper his word to the salvation of many souls in that city. And it is probable more good would have been done, but for a few troublesome spirits, who, under a pretence of standing up for the Church, hurt the minds of many. The Lord greatly blessed his word among the soldiers. Eight serjeants and about forty privates met constantly in class, and some of them became eminent for piety. Notwithstanding every difficulty cast in the way, the society increased to six hundred and sixty ; many of whom were much alive to God, and ornaments to their profession when we left them.

About this time one of our travelling preachers, a pious, good man, related to me the following instance of the divine interposition, namely :—A few months ago as he was travelling on his circuit, he was met by three robbers ; one seized the horse by the bridle, a second clapped a pistol to his breast, and a third caught hold of him to pull him from his horse, all swearing they would instantly have his money or his life. He looked them steadfastly in the face, saying, “ Friends, did you pray this morning ? ” They seemed greatly confounded. But one of them instantly took his watch out of his pocket ; another took off his saddle-bags, and pulled out a knife to rip them open, but he cried, “ Stop, friend ! there is nothing there but a few religious books, and you are very welcome to have them to read if you please ; and as for money, I have only twopence halfpenny,” which he took out of his pocket immediately, and gave to one of them. “ Now,” says he, “ shall I give you my coat ? You are welcome to any thing I have about me : only, I would have you to remember, I am a servant of God, and am now going on his



errand. I am going to preach at such a place, and I beg you will let me pray with you before we part ; and it may do you more good than any thing I have given to you." At this one of them said to the rest, " We will keep nothing belonging to this man ; if we do, vengeance will pursue us." He took the money and returned it with his own hands into his pocket, and insisted that the other should return the watch ; which, after a little hesitation, he put back also : and the third, taking up the bags, laid them on the horse, and fastened them to the saddle again. He thanked them all for their great civility ; and again renewing his request that they would let him pray with them, he fell upon his knees on the road, and prayed with great power. Two of them went off, but the third kneeled close by him all the time, and was very much affected ; so that there was reason to hope he was resolved to become a new man.

In the year 1790 I was appointed for London. Here I found a numerous, pious, and loving people, who have been accustomed to the Methodist discipline from the beginning, and who, in general, pay attention to our rules, for conscience' sake. We have an extensive field of action in this great metropolis, and plenty of work for more than three times the number of itinerant preachers than have ever yet been employed on this circuit. When my coming was first proposed to me, I felt exceedingly the importance of such a charge, and should have objected to the appointment, only I was afraid of running counter to the order of God. But I did not foresee the solemn scene which lay before me, or my timidity would probably have prevailed. I had much comfort, both in my labours and family connections, for nearly seven months. But it is impossible to describe what I felt on the removal of our venerable father to paradise : yet I esteem it the greatest honour ever done me, that I was providentially called to

accompany him in his last journey, and be with him in his latest moments.

Added to this irreparable loss, many other disagreeable circumstances, arising from the general stir occasioned through our whole connection by this awful event, made the situation of my brethren and me here very distressing. God alone knoweth how my own mind was exercised from the time of Mr. Wesley's death till the conference. But when I came to Manchester, and saw what manner of spirit the preachers in general were of, how brotherly love prevailed among them, and that all were resolved to go on in the good old way, the snare of the enemy was entirely broken. I therefore returned to my charge with joy, fully resolved to act in harmony with my brethren, and, by the help of God, to live and die an itinerant Methodist preacher.

It is matter of praise that the great Head of the church is still with us, in a powerful manner. Many are the souls that have been convinced and brought to God among us, and near this city, in the space of eighteen months last past. The congregations are large and attentive; and the societies are increased to upward of three thousand members; which is more by some hundreds than they ever were before. But Satan has not been wanting to stir up a spirit of discord in some: nevertheless, the Lord has graciously overruled it hitherto; so that the people in general are in peace, and the word of the Lord continues to run and is glorified. But to return to my own experience.

I observed in the former part of this account that my justification was particularly clear; so was also the work of sanctification; and as I received the former of these by faith alone, so did I the latter. But I did not retain the witness of full salvation long. Nevertheless, the Lord has graciously restored it to me at different times;

and yet as often have I proved unfaithful, and by giving way to unbelief, have been robbed of my confidence, as it related to that grace. I bless God, I now feel a measure of the genuine fruits of holiness; yet I am clear I have not so much of these as many of the adult children of God do possess. I feel myself utterly unworthy of the least of the mercies of my Lord; but my trust is in his righteousness. I feel a need of recurring daily to the blood of sprinkling, and am persuaded that the Lord will correct and pardon what he sees amiss.

It is now twenty-nine years since I was first convinced of sin; and a little more than twenty-three since I tasted of the pardoning love of God: from which time (excepting once for a space of about two-months) I have been enabled, through grace, to look up to God as my reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. About twenty-two of those years I have been endeavouring in some small measure to recommend the same blessing to others; and I praise the Lord who hath given me some reason to believe I did not run before I was sent. Yet I have much cause to be ashamed before God, that I have not been more holy and more useful. However, one thing I can say,—the same principle I set out with continues until this day. It was the “love of Christ” which then “constrained me.” And the language of my soul now is,—

“My life, my blood, I here present,  
If for thy cause they may be spent;  
Thy faithful witness will I be,  
'Tis fix'd, I can do all through thee.”

Before I left home to preach the gospel, I thought an itinerant life was calculated, above all others, to promote a growth in grace, as it cuts off all pecuniary advantages and secular concerns. I still believe God is able to uphold his messengers, and cause his grace to abound toward them. But, upon the whole, few are more criti-

cally circumstanced, all things considered, than a Methodist preacher; especially those who are called to superintend in our connection. It is a mercy, indeed, if while these are looking to their Lord's vineyard, they do not neglect their own. I often fear this has been too much my own case; and have heartily wished I had less to do with public affairs in the church of God, and that I might spend the whole of my time in recommending the love of Christ to perishing sinners. But one thing I firmly believe,—whatever the Lord calls to, he will qualify for; and that he never calls them who love him to any thing which will necessarily make them love him less; and therefore, if I have suffered loss in my own soul, I take all the blame to myself. It is certain, every minister of Christ requires, not only much wisdom and prudence, but also peculiar resolution and firmness of mind. He that would faithfully serve Christ and his cause among us, must not seek the favour of men. Nevertheless, "the servant of the Lord should not strive; but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." It might have been more consistent with my own peace, had I paid more strict attention to this rule in some cases.

I have often brought heaviness upon my mind, by reproving, with too much warmth, what I believed wrong at the time; and perhaps I have incurred the displeasure of some, more than needful; who for want of candour have retained prejudice to their own hurt. But I trust, in future, the Lord will fortify my mind with patience, and give me more of that love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things."

My soul at present doth hunger and thirst after a more entire conformity to the image of God. I see nothing so

desirable as holiness ; and I am resolved, through grace, to recommend it to all, both by example and precept ; and I pray God, his kingdom may descend with power. I trust the time is near, when the Lord shall appear to “ make an end of sin in me, in all,—and bring in everlasting righteousness ; and that the whole earth shall soon be filled with his glory.” He who hath promised it saith, “ Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

---

For three years after the conclusion of this narrative Mr. Rogers continued his itinerant labours ; and then he was compelled to desist.

In the Minutes of the Conference for the year 1807, it is said concerning him, “ He possessed a strong and vigorous understanding ; and being called at an early age to the ministry of the word, he laboured with considerable success to acquire that knowledge, without which, zeal, even in a good cause, too frequently goes astray. His sermons were generally rendered impressive and useful, by sound doctrine, scripturally and zealously enforced. His latter days were spent in a way consistent with the tenor of his active life. Being compelled, by multiplied infirmities and afflictions, to retire from the arduous duties of itinerancy, after having travelled thirty-two years, he settled in Guisborough, in the north riding of Yorkshire, within five miles of the place of his nativity. Here he usually preached twice a week, till he was called to the bosom of his God. An inflammation on his lungs terminated, in ten days from its commencement, his earthly existence. He contemplated the approach of death with that calmness and resignation which characterize the genuine saint ; and when his afflicted wife observed to him, seeing him struggling for

breath, 'This is hard work, my dear ;' he replied, as he could get utterance, 'Good work, good work, once for all !' Thus prepared, his spirit took its flight to paradise, on January 28th, 1807. It is worthy of remark, that until the time of his last illness, he rose every morning at six o'clock, even through the winter, and in his very debilitated state, and devoted an hour to the perusal of the Holy Scriptures."

## THOMAS ROBERTS, A. M.

BY JAMES BUCKLEY.

---

It is very natural for the friends of departed worth to be desirous of seeing the names which they have so justly held in high estimation, appear early among the holy witnesses of Jesus, and recorded in their order in the memorials of the faithful. It might therefore be expected that this memoir should have had an earlier appearance ; which would have been the case, had not circumstances intervened over which human foresight could have no control. After the writer of this had been requested to furnish an account of his lamented friend, and had made some arrangements for the purpose, it was understood that Mr. Roberts had expressed a wish that, should any thing be recorded of him, it might be done by his valued friend, Dr. Clarke. In accordance with which, application was made to him ; but before his able pen could enter upon this labour of brotherly love, death overtook him, cut short his numerous literary and ministerial labours ; and, instead of recording those events, which, at best, can only, in the present state, be seen as in “ a glass darkly,” he was called to join his triumphant and glorified brother, to contemplate, in the unclouded light of eternity, the mysteries of providence and grace unfolded, by which their useful pilgrimage had been distinguished ; and to celebrate, in blissful friendship and harmony, the wonders of that redeeming love which had so long been the subject of their successful ministry. The friendly task then reverted to the present writer ; but,

owing to the declining and precarious state of his health, he has been prevented from accomplishing it till recently. If apology were necessary for the length of this memoir, he would observe, that Mr. Roberts was a man of no ordinary character. Having long enjoyed his friendship, and known him well, both in public and private life, and being many years his fellow-labourer in the ministry, the writer cannot but regret his own inadequacy to do justice to the numerous excellences, with which, as a man, a Christian, and a minister, his friend was so richly endowed, and of which the following can only be considered an imperfect outline. It is worthy of observation, that, whoever takes an impartial retrospect of the intellectual and moral state of Great Britain, or of the world at large, at the period of the commencement of Wesleyan Methodism, and of the favourable change which has been progressively effected, and which continues to bear an imposing aspect in its rapidly extending influence, cannot but acknowledge that, among the instruments which have been employed, Methodism has been a most powerful agent in the hands of God, by which the light of his glory and grace has been diffused, not only through our native land, but even through "the dark places of the earth." During the progress of its operation, it has been supplied, out of the ordinary course, with faithful ministers of various gifts, peculiarly adapted to their great work ; some of whom, by the efforts of native genius, unwearied diligence, and the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, acquired literary and ministerial eminence, and joyously testified in the hour of dissolution the immutable truth and strong consolation of the gospel of Christ, which they had so faithfully preached. Those of them who took an early part in this great work must be deemed worthy of double honour and faithful record. Of the truth of these observations, the subject of the following memoir is no ordinary illustration, in the bright assem-



blage of talents and qualifications which were so peculiarly adapted to the sphere assigned him, and in which he moved for nearly half a century, with much honour to himself, maintaining through the vicissitudes of life an unabated attachment to Methodism in its doctrines, discipline, and institutions. His chief joy was in the prosperity of the Christian churches, and the eternal salvation of men, for whom Christ died.

Thomas Roberts was a native of Bodmin, in the county of Cornwall, and was born May 19th, 1765. His father, Thomas Roberts, was a native of the same place; he married Elizabeth Best, of a respectable family in that county, and had three children, of whom Thomas was the youngest. It is not generally known, but is worthy of remark, that his father was a descendant of the late noble family that possessed the title of earl of Radnor. John Roberts (as the name was then written) was elevated by James I. to the peerage, by the title of baron of Bodmin, Viscount Truro, and earl of Radnor. He was maternally descended from a pious family of Nonconformists, who suffered under the persecutions of Charles II.; though they had been most firmly attached to the royal cause during the parliamentary wars. Mr. Roberts's great-uncle, by his zealous adherence to his sovereign, often exposed himself to imminent peril, in attending that monarch while in the west of England. The persecution of the Puritans continuing very severe, several of the family, for conscience' sake, emigrated to the transatlantic continent, to enjoy in the wilderness of New-England the divine light and spiritual privileges which were denied them in their native land. Of this branch of the family there is no further record. The movements of the mysterious wheel of Providence sometimes retrograde; and the descendants of the great and noble are placed in a more humble station, for the accomplishment of wise purposes, that they

may receive the more permanent and unfading honours which come from above, and that their names may rise in a different hemisphere in imperishable glory and eternal honour. This was the case with the father's house of my deceased friend, some of whom have received the honourable title of "kings and priests" to God, in the kingdom of heaven. The pride of ancestry was not, however, the subject of vain glory in him; but with adoring reverence he recognised the hand of the Lord which had brought him low, that in due time he might be exalted among the "princes of his people."

He was bereaved of his excellent mother when he was as yet young: and for her memory he ever indulged the most tender affection. He writes of her,—“She was endowed with many amiable qualities; and was much esteemed for the beauty of her person, but more for the excellences of her mind. She possessed a remarkably strong understanding, which was richly adorned by divine grace, after she was brought to the foot of the cross of Christ, and long and deeply instructed in the school of affliction. A little before the birth of her youngest son, she was induced, through the entreaty of her sister, to hear the Methodist preachers; when, through the influence of the Spirit of truth, she was convinced of sin, and brought to the enjoyment of that salvation which is by faith in Christ Jesus. ‘Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.’ It pleased him to place her in the furnace of affliction, in which she lingered for several years, at times enduring the most poignant pain, which she bore with unshaken faith, unwearied patience, and cheerful resignation to the will of her heavenly Father. Sometimes her joy and anticipations of glory were inexpressible. June 16th, 1773, her heart and flesh failed; the power of articulation ceased. Her children being brought to her bedside, she lifted up her hands, and, raising her ex-

pressive eyes to heaven, silently blessed each of them, solemnly committing them to the protection and blessing of God. On the following day her happy spirit escaped to paradise. She left a good name, more precious and fragrant than ointment. She was admired and beloved by all who knew her in the neighbouring societies. Her respected friend, Mr. Slade, of St. Austle, improved the mournful event, by preaching her funeral sermon to a deeply affected congregation from Hebrews xii, 12."

His father long survived the wife of his youth, and was made a happy partaker of that sanctifying grace, which proved the support of his declining years. He died in a good old age, and peacefully entered into the joy of his Lord, September 13th, 1809. A funeral sermon was preached on the occasion of his death to a large congregation of mournful hearers, by the Rev. Edward Millward, from Hebrews ix, 27

Mr. Roberts, young as he was, (being then only eight years of age,) was deeply affected at the loss of his affectionate and valuable mother. He would frequently retire to meditate on the sorrowful event, and long to be with her. By her pious tuition "he feared the Lord from his youth;" and though juvenile vanities for a season captivated his heart, the principles of piety which she inculcated had a strong hold upon him, and their restraining influence kept his conscience tenderly alive. He was educated in a school in his native town, where, owing to the severity of the master, and his culpable inattention to his pupils, his learning and morals were exposed to shipwreck. When his mind became more fully awakened to the importance of heartfelt religion, which was in his seventeenth year, he states that "he gave himself no credit for employing his time in eliciting scintillations of genius, instead of acquiring solid intellectual culture." He was a constant and enthusiastic correspondent, under various assum-

ed appellations, in the annual diaries and some periodical works. To a few pieces his name appeared. Some of these were coruscations of a hopeful genius, which was subsequently to become a sanctified and steady flame, and shine with lustre in a more elevated sphere. These pursuits were altogether abandoned, after hearing the venerable founder of Methodism preach at the celebrated pit of Gwennap, in the year 1782, when the gracious impressions which, from his earliest recollection, had kept his heart tender, were deepened and confirmed. He was prevailed upon, after surmounting some painful difficulties, to join the society, by which he incurred the displeasure of several of his relatives; but his whole soul being now graciously excited, he resolved, by the grace of God, to be decided. He had before made many vows, and even entered into written engagements, to devote himself to the Lord; but these were as often broken; for the carnal mind had the dominion. He now, however, saw where his strength lay; that in the Lord alone he could have righteousness and strength. Sometimes, impelled by the terrors of the Lord, with godly sorrow he drew nigh to the mercy seat; but more frequently drawn by the love of Christ, he followed on to know the Lord, as a sin-pardoning God, and reconciled Father. He thus reasoned,—“If God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, then I am included in the covenant of mercy.” The Lord, whom he sought with many prayers and tears, gave him this consolation, that if he had given his Son for him, he would not withhold pardon, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. This consolation he received by faith in Christ, which justifieth the ungodly. His evidence was bright, his joy was great; and the Spirit of adoption, sent into his heart, cried, “Abba, Father.” He was thus prepared to sustain, with patience and Christian fortitude, those trials and persecutions which awaited

him, and was qualified for future usefulness by those clear views with which he was favoured of Christian experience and of the great doctrines of the gospel, repentance toward God, justification by faith, entire sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and that practical holiness which he impressively and eloquently preached through the course of his ministry, to the edification and consolation of thousands. He felt the force, and enjoyed the blessedness, of that command of the Saviour, "Have salt in yourselves."

Having obtained mercy of the Lord, he soon became active in his cause; forming and conducting prayer-meetings, and occasionally giving an exhortation. By these things he gave great offence to his uncle, a respectable manufacturer residing at Gwennap, with whom he had lived from the time at which he left school. The opposition which he met with became so violent, that he was under the necessity of leaving his uncle's house; for he was not to be moved, either by threats or worldly considerations, from the hope of the gospel, or the good work of prayer, and active exertion for the conversion of sinners. This event appears to have been overruled for the furtherance of the gospel, laying a train for his future usefulness. On returning to Bodmin, his native place, the Lord gave him favour in the sight of the people. He soon collected and formed a class, in which he had great delight; and he entered on a sphere of general usefulness, visiting the country round, endeavouring to reclaim sinners from the error of their way, and to build up the scattered flock of Christ. The preachers and people, observing his fervent piety and active zeal, entreated him to devote himself to the work of the ministry, believing him to be called of God to the sacred office. After much persuasion, and feeling that the Spirit of the Lord God was upon him, he commenced his career as a local preacher, but not without much fear and trembling; for, he says, "I was but a child, and a

babe in Christ." However, believing that a dispensation of the gospel was given him, he "conferred not with flesh and blood;" knowing that the excellency of the power was of God. A great and effectual door being opened to him, he zealously entered into it, and was greatly assisted by the counsel and prayers of his pious friends, and particularly encouraged by the blessing of the Lord on his labours. Though not without opposition from the adversaries of religion, being in persecutions often, and several times to the hazard of his life, such was the effectual operation of the divine word and Spirit in the conversion of sinners, the unity of Christian affection that subsisted in the little flock, and the spiritual refreshment with which they were favoured from the presence of the Lord, that he counted not his life dear to him, but could cheerfully have laid it down for the love he had to Christ, and the people with whom he was associated.

He ever indulged a strong partiality for his native town, concerning which he remarks,—“September, 1814, I went to Bodmin to open a new chapel. The good work has gloriously prospered; the solitary place has obtained the excellence of Carmel. I preached from Isaiah lx, 7, ‘I will glorify the house of my glory.’ The preceding Lord’s day I preached in the town-hall, which was politely offered to me by the mayor, from Rom. iii, 22–25.” It is more easy to conceive than express the feelings of his mind on this occasion, visiting, after a lapse of years, the scenes of his youth. His sensations were not unlike those of Jacob, when he returned to Bethel. It was indeed a season of joy.

This rising light could not be “hid under a bushel.” Being recommended to the notice of Mr. Wesley, he was immediately called to the itinerant work; and, at the conference held in Bristol, July, 1786, was appointed to the Londonderry circuit, in Ireland. This circumstance

was quite unexpected by him, and became a subject of such distressing reasoning and perplexity, as nearly to overwhelm both his body and mind. From the Rev. John and Charles Wesley he received the kindest expressions of affection and encouragement; but he still doubted his call to the itinerant life. He says, that "he feared his own insufficiency, and that he dreaded putting an unhallowed hand to the sacred office." Circumstances, however, seasonably occurred to abate his scruples. He began to think that he was, like Gideon, seeking from the Lord a sign, rather than walking by faith in the all-sufficiency of Him who said, "Go and preach the gospel. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end." His fears subsided, and his heart with adoring submission said, "Here I am, send me." Previous to his departure for his circuit, he visited his friends in the west, where the Lord had given him seals to his mission, His spiritual children, with streaming eyes, and the numerous congregations, united in affectionate, fervent prayer, that "the Lord would bless him with the holy anointing of his Spirit;" that "he would be with him in the way he should go;" and that the "word of the Lord might run and be glorified" by his instrumentality. At St. Ives, where he was to embark, he was joined by his friend Mr. Pierce, who purposed to accompany him to Ireland. On September 5th they landed at Dunleary, after a prosperous voyage, and proceeded to Dublin, where they were received by the preachers and people with great Christian cordiality. Being furnished with a horse, and the necessary equipments, he entered upon his journey to Londonderry, accompanied by his friend as far as Drogheda, where they parted. This appears to have produced a very painful effect on Mr. Roberts's mind. He was alone, surrounded by a people to whose manners and habits he was unaccustomed: having a dreary prospect of mountains before him, and his horse failing, his

heart began to sink ; his reasoning relative to his call to the ministry returned with redoubled force ; the ardour of his zeal was chilled, his faith became weak, and his spirit faint ; but being admonished by his divine Master, that “ he who setteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom,” he resolved, though faint and weary, to pursue his course. Leaving his crippled horse at Manorhamilton, he proceeded on foot to Armagh, where he was met by that man of God, the Rev. Gustavus Armstrong. The meeting of the brethren with St. Paul at Appii Forum could not be more seasonable than this interview. “ He thanked God and took courage.” The acquaintance which was then formed ripened into indissoluble friendship ; their souls were knit together as those of David and Jonathan.

Mrs. Richardson, of Charlemount, to whom he gives the honourable title of a “ mother in Israel,” showed him great hospitality, and received him as an “ angel of God.” Being again supplied with a horse, he cheerfully journeyed on to Dungannon and Cookestown, where he preached, and was favoured with the gracious presence of the Lord. On the 14th he arrived at the place of his destination, where he was courteously entertained by Mrs. Knox, who appeared at once to recognise the tenderness of his heart. She cordially adopted him as her son, and her continued sympathizing attentions were a source of much comfort to him in this season of painful conflict. At this period commenced his acquaintance with Alexander Knox, Esq., which to him was no small acquisition, as that gentleman had been favoured with a liberal education, and, in addition to his various reading and extensive knowledge, possessed a fine taste and brilliant fancy, sanctified by devotion. This was an important era in the history of my friend, who possessed a mind and genius capable of great culture, with an intense thirst for the attainment of



knowledge, particularly those branches which, under divine influence, might tend to promote his acceptance and usefulness in the ministry. He therefore thankfully, and with avidity, accepted the guidance of so accomplished a preceptor, by whom he was directed to that course of reading and study which greatly added to his theological store, and refined his style of composition and speaking; and, by attention to the most approved classical authors, he acquired that acumen and elegance for which he was afterward so remarkable. He ever appreciated the favours he had received from his highly respected friend; and, however they might afterward differ on certain points, which he much lamented, their esteem continued to be reciprocal to the end of life.

On his arrival in Derry he found that the Rev. Mr. Leech, his superintendent, had entered on the labours of the circuit soon after the Irish conference. He received, with a hearty welcome, his young colleague; and gave him such advice relative to his future labours as was needful; he prayed for him, and exhorted him to be strong in the Lord, and of good courage. Mr. Roberts entered upon his new sphere by preaching from 1 Cor. ii, 1, 2. This text was in accordance with the feeling of his heart, and solemn covenant engagements; and from this source he appears to have received a reviving influence. "The Lord satisfied his mouth with good things, so that his youth was renewed like the eagle's." The preaching of the regularly appointed minister had, till now, been principally confined to the city and its vicinity. But at the previous conference it had been proposed to send a missionary to visit a large tract of country which had not as yet been occupied. Nothing could be more appropriate than the appointment of Mr. Leech, who was favoured with a vigorous constitution, and active, persevering zeal. This was a good example for a young disciple; and the nature

of his work was calculated to inure him to hardships, that he might bear them as a good soldier of Christ. Seeing thousands sitting in the thick darkness of superstition, and the shadow of death, perishing for lack of knowledge, his compassion was kindled, and he endeavoured faithfully to follow the example of his superintendent, though his plans were extensive and arduous. He says, "We travelled through a large extent of country, from Derry across the Swilly to Rathmelton, Rathmullon, Ballynagoliclough, and round through Donegal county, preaching in hired houses or rooms wherever we could obtain them; at other times in the market-places, streets, or highways. We thus struck out a circuit through Luttonbury, Raphoe, Strabane, Dungwin, Newtownlimavady, and many intermediate places." It is natural to suppose, that the rough and unfrequented tracts through which he had to pass, the constant toil, privation, and even hardship he had to endure, should cause his physical and mental energies sometimes to assume a plaintive tone. He observes, that, in his lonely walks, when, with weeping eyes, he beheld the vessels passing down the river for "good old England," he could not but imagine he heard his friends addressing him, in the language of Thompson to his friend, when residing near the same spot:—

"Lend me the plaint, which to the lonely main,  
With memory conversing, you will pour,  
As on the pebbled shore you pensive stray,  
Where Derry's mountains a black crescent form,  
And 'mid their ample rounds receive the waves,  
Which from the frozen pole resounding rush  
Tempestuous, though from native sunshine far,  
Far from your friends, the sunshine of the soul."

Though he occasionally, in the season of depression and painful discouragement, thought of leaving the ministry, he knew that should he, like Jonah, attempt to flee from the work of the Lord, the winds and the waves were

in the divine hands, which could easily convert them into instruments of correction ; and he felt persuaded, that “wo” would be “unto him, if he preached not the gospel.” A better feeling would then return : he relied on the sure word of promise, “My grace is sufficient for thee :” “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.” He had no cause to regret, at the close of the year, what he had suffered for the gospel’s sake. Sinners had been brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God : societies had been formed, and the moral wilderness and solitary places had begun to sing for joy. Many of these societies not only continue to the present day, but are become honourable branches of the church of God. On account of these labours he deemed himself a missionary ; and referred to them in after years, when advocating the cause of missions, by eloquent appeals to the sympathy and benevolence of his fellow Christians ; and he thanked God that he was ever deemed worthy to be received into the missionary ministry, for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ.

His growing talents, piety, and fervent zeal had attracted attention, so as to recommend him to the favour of Mr. Wesley, who well knew how to form a correct judgment of character, and who was ever ready to encourage and call into useful exercise talents of promise and worth. At the Dublin conference, 1787, Mr. Roberts was appointed the superintendent of the Colerain circuit. Though he viewed this as indicative of the high esteem of Mr. Wesley, being an office very rarely conferred on so young a man, he felt tremblingly alive to the responsibility which was laid upon him, and earnestly entreated to be excused ; but Mr. Wesley insisting upon it, he submitted. One thing greatly tended to lessen the cross, (for such he felt it,) which was, that his friend Mr. G. Armstrong was appointed to be his fellow-labourer, and cheerfully bore

the burden with him. The field of their labour was extensive ; they had almost incessant travelling and preaching ; besides the formation of societies, and the especial nurture of those which had been recently formed by his indefatigable predecessor, the Rev. Walter Griffith, who was a burning and a shining light in many dark regions of his native land. About this time commenced Mr. Roberts's acquaintance with him, which ripened into friendship the most sincere and ardent, and continued to the close of life.

Mr. Roberts continued steadily to pursue his holy calling, and to fulfil the duties of his office, though not without much anxious solicitude, and occasional discouragement. He had, however, the approbation of his brethren, the approving testimony of his own conscience, and the satisfaction of seeing many added to the societies. In evidence of his growing popularity, he was removed, in July, 1788, to the city of Cork, where he spent the two succeeding years. The sphere in which he there moved was, in some respects, less laborious and trying ; but he had to preach frequently to the same people, who were far more intelligent than those whom he had been accustomed to address. This called forth his mental energies, that as a "wise householder he might bring out of his treasury things new and old." His situation being more favourable for reading and study, and affording greater facilities for the acquisition of knowledge, his thirst became more intense : he made all his attainments, however, subservient to his theological pursuits, and preparations for the pulpit, fervently praying that all might be sanctified by the Holy Spirit to the increase of his spirituality and ministerial usefulness. In this circuit he appears to have enjoyed much nearness to God, and increasing fellowship with the Father and the Son. He had the satisfaction of living in the affections of the people ; the Lord working

by him in the awakening of sinners, and the building up of believers in their most holy faith. During this period, in a correspondence with Mr. Wesley, he appears to have disclosed all the feelings of his heart, especially respecting some difficulties in which he was placed. Having requested his advice on an important point, several letters passed on the subject, and he felt it his duty to follow the paternal direction of his wise counsellor, and replied to that effect, when he received the following answer :—

*“ London Feb. 12th, 1789.*

“DEAR TOMMY,—You send me good news indeed ; I congratulate you upon your deliverance : it is not a little one. Only He who is almighty was able to burst those bonds in sunder. Many years ago I was exactly in the same case ; and just then, when I came to those words in the lesson for the day, ‘ Son of man, behold, I take from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke,’ I was quite stunned, and could not just then read a word more ; but afterward I saw God was wiser than me.

“It seems to me, that you draw the right conclusion from this remarkable providence. Surely God does now give a loud call to devote your whole self to the Lord. Commending you to God, I am, dear Tommy, your affectionate brother and friend,

JOHN WESLEY.”

The pious society in Cork, with whom he had been favoured with so many blessings in heavenly places in Christ, were greatly endeared to him, and ever lived in his affectionate remembrance. He often related, with much interest, a visit which he paid to them in the year 1814, when he received a good report of some who had died in the Lord, and entered into glory, while the survivors welcomed him as the messenger of the Lord, who had been to them the instrument of salvation. It seems that some desire had been expressed for his appointment to Dublin :

on which Dr. Coke, Mr. Wesley's representative to the Irish conference, wrote to him :—

“ *Colerain, June 8th, 1790.*

“ MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I feel some desire of appointing you for Dublin, at the conference. I think, at present, it may be for the glory of God. Will you give me the choice of the alternative, of appointing you for Dublin or taking you to England? Your faithful friend,

“ THOMAS COKE.”

Mr. Roberts bowed to the decision of Mr. Wesley, on which he received the following reply :—

“ *Douglas, Isle of Man, June 19th, 1790.*

“ MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I have just received a letter from Mr. Wesley, informing me, that he intends to station you next year in London; and observes, ‘I shall then have him under my eye.’ I shall let Mr. Wesley know what you wrote to me in your last. I think it the best way to leave the whole to God. If you stay in Ireland, you will probably be appointed for Dublin. Your most faithful friend,

THOMAS COKE.”

To the first of these appointments Mr. Roberts had strong and insuperable objections: though he felt great delicacy in opposing the kind wishes of a man to whose judgment he paid so much deference, yet he urged his youth and inexperience as a sufficient reason for declining so prominent a station. Mr. Wesley therefore very kindly admitted his objections, and appointed him to Bristol; at the same time, with great solemnity, receiving him into full connection. This was to him as the ordination of God; he renewed his covenant engagements, and “resolved more fully to devote his heart, his life, his talents, his all to the Lord, and the work of the ministry.” His stay in Bristol was but of short continuance. Mr. Wesley,

in his tour through South Wales, finding some societies in Pembrokeshire in a very unpleasant state, and which required “the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove” to set, in order, fixed on Mr. Roberts to accomplish this difficult work, and wrote to him as follows :—

“*Haverfordwest, Aug. 13th, 1790.*

“DEAR TOMMY,—Now I shall make a trial of you, whether I can confide in you or no. Since I came hither I have been much concerned. This is the most important circuit in all Wales ; but it has been vilely neglected by the assistant, whom, therefore, I can trust no more. I can trust you, even in so critical a case. I desire therefore that, whoever opposes, you will set out immediately, and come hither as soon as ever you can. I wish you could meet me at Cardiff or Cowbridge. You will see by the printed plan when I shall be at either of those places. If you have not notice soon enough to do this, try to meet me to-morrow se’nnight at the New-Passage, unless you can get a passage by the weekly boat to Swansea. If it be possible, do not fail. It may be, this may be the beginning of a lasting friendship between you and, dear Tommy, your affectionate friend and brother,

“J. WESLEY.

“N. B. You are to act as assistant.”

This letter is expressive of the care of Mr. Wesley for the welfare of the societies, and shows the motive by which he was induced to exercise an affectionate command over the preachers. Mr. Roberts felt himself placed in a painful dilemma : from the affection of the people of Bristol, and the gratifying prospect of usefulness presented to him there, he could not but feel some reluctance to acquiesce in this unexpected proposal. However, obedience was a paramount duty ; and he hastened to meet Mr. Wesley, received his direction and advice, and

immediately entered upon his new charge; believing the power which ordained it to be of God: and so it proved; for on this very incident turned all the events of his future earthly pilgrimage. A tide of popularity flowed in upon him; all ranks of people flocked to hear, and gladly received the word of life from his lips. .

Having made such arrangements as gave peace and harmony to the societies, he obtained leave of Mr. Wesley to visit his friends in Cornwall. On arriving at his native county, he states that his feelings were inexpressible; he involuntarily threw himself on the ground, kissed it, then rose upon his knees, and, in the spirit of devout thanksgiving, praised God, who had led him in the way which he had gone, kept him from evil, and crowned him with his goodness and tender mercy. He rose, and hastened to his father's house, where he was received with the joy of paternal affection, and soon encircled by his relations and Christian friends, who gave him a hearty welcome, and thanked God on his behalf. His first text was expressive of the sentiments of his heart, Psalm cxvi, 12, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" After this most agreeable and profitable visit, he returned to Haverfordwest, where the preachers resided, the circuit embracing the county of Pembroke and town of Carmarthen. He renewed his labours under favourable circumstances. "The power of the Lord was present to save," and Zion prospered. He was much assisted in his pastoral care by the wise and seasonable advice which he received in his correspondence with Mr. Wesley. It is worthy of note, that when that great man could no longer write, through physical decay, his intellect was still clear, and his spirit alive to the best interests of the people of his care. He dictated the following letter, which was written by the Rev. Joseph Bradford, and signed it with his own hand, the day before the seizure



which finally terminated his glorious career. This was one of the last, if not the very last, that hand which had written so much, and to so good purpose, ever signed.

*“London, Feb. 18th, 1791.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—Who was it that opposed your reducing the preachers in the circuit to two? and on what pretence? We must needs reduce all our expenses everywhere, as far as possible. You must never leave off till you carry this point. Form bands in every large society. I am glad to hear that your journey home has not been in vain. My best wishes attend my friends. I am, dear Tommy, your affectionate friend and brother,

*“J. WESLEY.”*

This letter was soon followed by the sorrowful tidings of the death of this great man, Mr. Roberts's beloved and revered father and friend. The feelings of his mind were powerfully excited by this event, and were expressed in a sermon which he preached on the occasion, to a deeply affected congregation, at Carmarthen, from 2 Sam. iii, 38: “Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?” This sermon, and the hymns which he had composed for the service, made an impression which is still remembered, and still spoken of with interest, by a few survivors. He also wrote an elegy on the death of Mr. Wesley, which was published in the December Magazine of that year; a quotation from which will convey some idea of the veneration and deep emotions of his heart.

“What ardour now my trembling heart inspires!  
 How glows my bosom with superior fires!  
 I hear, I hear the flaming chariot roll;  
 The clouds drop sadness on my fainting soul.  
 See! see, the blazing portals wide extend;  
 He mounts! he flies! my father and my friend!  
 The rapid coursers gain the crystal walls;  
 He disappears! and lo! the mantle falls.

“To thee, blest sire, shall every breast be moved,  
And all thy children sing the saint they loved.  
For thee shall science drop the filial tear,  
And sacred virtue shall thy name revere.  
For thee the Muse shall pour the sorrowing lay,  
And pure devotion languish o’er thy clay ;  
Remotest generations yet unborn  
Shall breathe the deep-felt sigh o’er Wesley’s urn.”

His continued labours in this circuit were not only attended with more than ordinary acceptance, but extensive usefulness; so that he states this to be one of the most agreeable and happy years of his life. Several persons of great respectability became his regular hearers; one of whom was Miss Wogan, of Weston, near Haverfordwest, the eldest daughter of John Wogan, Esq., a descendant of one of the most ancient families in that part of the principality. Mr. Roberts and this excellent lady, who was one of the seals of his ministry, commenced a correspondence, which afterward ripened into more than ordinary friendship. It was in the summer of this year, on the arrival of Mr. Roberts from Ireland, to attend the conference, that the writer of this memoir first saw him; and he well recollects the admiration excited at his fine personal appearance, and the elegance of his manners; but, above all, at the impressive strains of eloquence which flowed from his lips, and the holy unction that accompanied his preaching.

As the ensuing conference was to be held at Manchester, Mr. Roberts, with two of his brethren, to save expense, agreed to go by sea to Liverpool. This nearly proved fatal to them. They sailed from Fishguard, in a small Welsh trader; and, when off the Isle of Burry, were in imminent danger of shipwreck, from a tremendous storm that arose. Their lives were in the greatest jeopardy. Prayer was made, and the Lord remarkably answered. He rebuked the winds and the waves, and gave

them a favourable passage to their destined port; for which they praised their great Deliverer. On his arrival at Manchester, Mr. Roberts found gloom and anxiety depicted in the countenances of many of the brethren. Their Elijah was no more; he had finished his labours, mounted the triumphal chariot, and entered into the joy of his Lord. Deprived of the wise counsels and commanding influence of him who had so long presided over them with unparalleled wisdom, there was great searching of heart relative to the best line of conduct to be pursued, and mode of government to be adopted. After a day of humiliation and prayer, upon consulting the posthumous advice of their removed militant head, it was resolved "to submit to each other in the Lord," and to adopt that system of discipline, of the efficiency and utility of which the history of the connection since that period records ample proof. Mr. Roberts expresses himself to have been "tremblingly alive" during the discussion, the result of which received his cordial approbation, and undeviating concurrence through life.

At the conference of 1791 he was reappointed to the Bristol circuit, his name having stood there the preceding year. As the society in this city had been, from its formation, under the special care of Mr. Wesley, Mr. Roberts was led to hope for many advantages and spiritual blessings. He, however, soon found that the late arrangements did not accord with the sentiments of several of the influential persons. This placed him in circumstances of a trying nature, as he was firm in his purpose of carrying those arrangements into effect. Not having realized that usefulness and those consolations in Christ which he had anticipated, and being importuned by his friends in South Wales to return to them, he resolved to comply with their affectionate wishes; and at the conference of 1792 was again appointed to Pembrokeshire. After remaining in

Bristol, by particular request, to assist in opening the Portland chapel, he hastened once more to enjoy his beloved circle of friends in Haverfordwest and the circuit. The people heard him gladly, as one that played on a well-tuned instrument. His natural talent was rather that of a "son of consolation," than of a Boanerges; yet he did not fail to lead sinners to the foot of Sinai, and present to their view the majesty and glory of the divine Lawgiver, with the sound of the trumpet, denouncing wo, tribulation, and eternal death upon every soul of man that doeth evil; calling sinners to awake from the sleep of spiritual death, that they might have light, life, and salvation in Jesus Christ. The Lord opened the hearts of many to receive the engrafted word; some of whom have long since fallen asleep in Christ, while others are standing on the banks of Jordan, waiting to pass into the land of promise.

It has already been stated, that Miss Wogan was among the seals of Mr. Roberts's ministry; and that a correspondence had taken place between them. She had now for some time given proof of the sincerity and fervour of her piety; and the amiable qualities she possessed were rendered yet more amiable by the garment of righteousness with which she was clothed. Believing it to be the will of God that they should be united in marriage, their happy union (for such it was, though it proved but of short duration) took place at Clifton church, near Bristol, July 11th, 1793. This was a union of affection, formed in the fear of the Lord, and in reference to his glory; and not of worldly policy or sordid lucre. Miss Wogan's fortune, at the time of her marriage, being very limited, it was not until the death of her only brother, that she became co-heiress to the Weston estates. But had it been otherwise, she would have thought nothing too great to sacrifice for one who to her had been the minister of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Though her superior education and

accomplishments had prepared her to move in the higher circles, she resolutely broke from the gay world, to participate with her husband in his holy labours, and in the honours of the cross of Christ, which she esteemed greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

The conference being again at hand, Mr. Roberts repaired to meet his brethren at Leeds. In these yearly meetings, few felt a deeper sympathy with the joys and sorrows of the ministers with whom he was associated than he did, or was more affectionate and judicious in counsel. The general business being concluded, he returned to Haverfordwest, to which circuit he was reappointed. June 16th, 1794, he was favoured with the birth of a son; but this lovely firstborn was soon and suddenly snatched away. While playfully encircled in his father's arms he was seized with convulsions, and instantly expired. Thus the heart glowing with paternal affection was, in a moment, agonized with sorrow. This painful bereavement was shortly followed by one yet more afflictive. His beloved wife, after giving birth to a daughter, (who also died,) was seized with fever, and, notwithstanding the best medical skill, in a few days closed her valuable life. From the commencement of her illness she had a presentiment that she should die; and, with calm and cheerful submission to the divine will, prepared for the solemn change. Perceiving the sorrows of her husband, she took hold of his hand, and, looking on him with tender sympathy and sweetness, said, "God bless you! I go to heaven. I leave you to remain a short time after me. The Lord will graciously comfort you. I charge you to meet me in glory!"

Live till the Lord in glory come,  
And wait his heaven to share;  
He now is filling up our home;  
Go on, I'll meet you there."

These were her last words. On the 25th of May she entered into the life and glory which she had so triumphantly anticipated. The death of this amiable woman was universally lamented; and as an expression of mournful respect, her funeral was attended by most of the noblemen's and gentlemen's families in the surrounding country. Her remains were interred with those of her two children, in the chancel of Weston church, and a monument was erected with a suitable inscription.

It is scarcely possible to conceive the poignant grief to which the very sensitive feelings of Mr. Roberts were now subjected, as a bereft husband and father. In less than three months deprived of all he held dear on earth, hurled from the highest pinnacle of domestic felicity, and hopeful enjoyment, into an abyss of agonizing sorrow; his fainting soul looked up and said, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me; yet the Lord will remember his loving-kindness." Here faith reposed its confidence in the all-sufficiency and never-failing love of Him who had given and taken away. But notwithstanding the devout efforts of his mind to resolve all into the loving, wise, and sovereign will of his heavenly Father, and to believe "whom he loveth he chasteneth," and that for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holiness; he suffered much depression of mind, and the reiterated shocks so greatly affected his physical frame as to render him ever after incapable of fulfilling the whole of the arduous duties of the itinerant ministry. This was kindly considered by his brethren, and his future appointments were generally as an extra or supernumerary preacher. Some persons, for want of better information, attributed such appointments to other causes, supposing he might have undertaken the full labours of his station: of this, perhaps, no one could be a more competent judge than the writer of this memoir,

which he feels it his duty to state for the satisfaction of those who might have thought otherwise. It was in this day of sore trouble that his more particular intimacy with Mr. Roberts commenced; and this grew into a friendship that knew no diminution during the following thirty-eight years, eight of which, at different times, they were fellow-labourers together, and, during intervals, in the habit of correspondence and mutual visits. His spirit was always willing; the work of the ministry was the delight of his soul; and he was often deeply humbled that he should so far have given way to excessive grief as in any degree to paralyze his ministerial efforts: in this he thought he had offended his divine Master, and was justly corrected. He made many attempts to rally and regain his strength, and, what he called, his "post of honour," but was always unsuccessful. It is but just to bear this testimony to this rather prominent circumstance in his life and labours. It might justly be said of him that, in diffusing the sacred and fragrant ointment of the Saviour's name, he "did what he could;" and his brethren acted well in their indulgence toward him, and were amply repaid by the sincerity and constancy of his affection, and the unremitting zeal and liberality he manifested to promote the interests of the connection. In proof of his anxious desire to retain his place among his brethren, he attended the ensuing conference at Manchester, in hope the sorrows of his mind would be alleviated and his strength renewed; but in this he was disappointed by severe and continued affliction, so that he was scarcely able to attend a sitting, or enjoy any intercourse with his brethren. He was appointed to Bristol as supernumerary, and his labours were divided between that city and South Wales. On leaving Manchester he was prevailed upon to take a tour through North Wales, by which his health and spirits appeared to be considerably improved; but on his return to Haverford-

west, every thing tending to remind him of his great bereavement, he sunk, as he expresses it, “into the luxury of mournful solitude and wo,” till visited by his faithful and confidential friend, the Rev. Dr. Coke, who hastened to his aid, and by the fervour of his devout piety, the cheerfulness of his manners, and spiritual and literary conversation, roused him from the deep gloom of sorrow into which he had fallen; and, once more convinced of his error, he saw and felt the offence against Heaven, was laid in the dust before the sovereign Arbiter of life and death, and his soul said, “Arise, hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him.” Complying with the earnest wishes of the doctor, he accompanied him to Bristol; where, on a change of scene, and association with his old friends, he resumed his ministry, and the joy of the Lord became once more his strength. On his return to Haverfordwest, it required no small degree of fortitude to resist the recurrence of his former depression. Being solicited to preach, after some struggle with his acute feelings, he consented; and, in expatiating on the consolatory words of St. Paul, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” his word distilled as the dew on an overwhelming and deeply affected congregation. While exhibiting in a vivid light the scale of contrast between transitory, probationary suffering, and the eternal duration and great weight of glory, his mind appeared largely to participate of the heavenly gift, and to feel the powers of the world to come. This was a season to be remembered by many, and can never be forgotten by him who records it.

Few persons were less formed for abstraction, or were more susceptible of social enjoyment, than Mr. Roberts: what he designated “the dreadful vacuity of widowhood,” induced him again to form a connection, and enter into a union, which proved to him a great blessing from the



Lord. His late much-beloved wife, a little before her departure, pressing his hand, with great tenderness, said, "I leave you : I entreat you to think of our dear Mary : the Lord will graciously comfort you : " meaning her particular friend, Miss Randolph, the eldest daughter of William Randolph, Esq., of Bristol, between whom and herself a spiritual union had subsisted from the commencement of their religious course. What is very remarkable, they were both enlightened by the Spirit of truth, and convinced of the necessity of a change of heart, and enjoyment of a present salvation in Christ Jesus, at the same time, under the same sermon, preached by Mr. Roberts, from, "Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope ; even to-day do I declare I will render double to you." The above was not only the recommendation of strong, affectionate friendship, but of wisdom ; for no person could have been selected more suitable as a successor or as a help-mate. To this excellent lady he was happily united July 7th, 1796. The mildness of her disposition, the accomplishments of her mind, the elegance of her manners, the fervour of her piety, and the tender sympathizing interest with which she entered into the recent afflictions of her friend, were to him a healing restorative ; and he again, with renewed covenant engagements, pursued his beloved ministerial labours ; and wherein his physical strength was inadequate to the public labours of earlier life, he employed his pen, and through the medium of the press diffused the knowledge of the gospel of Christ.

From this period to the year 1811 he was appointed as an extra preacher to Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, Banwell, Downend, and Carmarthen. This sort of station was not only adapted to the precarious state of his health, relieving him from the responsibility and anxiety of the regular labours of the circuit, but enabled him to extend them to the neighbouring circuits, and to make extensive excu-

sions to preach occasional sermons in opening chapels and to attend meetings for public institutions, for which he was favoured with a special adaptation of talent. He was often solicited to plead in behalf of Kingswood School,—“the school of the sons of the prophets,” as he designated it,—of which he was the warm and liberal advocate. A sermon which he preached in aid of that excellent institution in King-street chapel, Bristol, was published in the Methodist Magazine for the year 1804, which at the time contributed to its pecuniary assistance. He was also the powerful and not unfrequent pleader in behalf of the rising and rapidly extending influence of Sunday schools, of which his affectionate and eloquent address to the members and friends of the Bath Sunday School Union, delivered in Walcot chapel, and published at their request, is a standing record. And how much his heart was engaged in works of charity relative to the education of the children of the poor, will be seen in an anonymous pamphlet, published on the Blagdon controversy. The applications to him were numerous ; and he refused none with which he could possibly comply, but frequently, considering his infirmities and debility, ran great risks, often subjecting himself to temporary confinement, and sometimes to severe illness, as will appear in subsequent parts of this narrative. But none of these things discouraged him : he thought this to be his special providential calling ; and as soon as a little recovered, and not unfrequently before, he would resume his ministerial labours of charity, in which he felt peculiar pleasure, often proving that divine strength was made perfect in human weakness, and favoured with many tokens that his mission was from above, and accompanied by gracious effusions of the Holy Spirit. In the cities of Bath and Bristol he was often associated with respectable ministers of different denominations on public occasions, by whom he was held in high estimation ; and

with a liberality of sentiment by which he was ever distinguished, but without compromise, he rendered them his valuable services, not unfrequently filling their pulpits with much acceptance.

Though Mr. Roberts did not appear as the author of any volumes or elaborate work, he rendered his aid to several respectable authors, and contributed from an early period to many periodical publications: most of his numerous writings, both prose and verse, were introduced to the public in the form of pamphlets of various sizes. As many of these are not generally known, and possess considerable merit, it may be gratifying to his friends to have some reference to the principal ones; also to such particular occurrences during the following years, as the brevity of this memoir will allow. At the conference held in Bristol, in the year 1798, he had the high gratification of being a principal instrument in the formation of what is denominated the Itinerant Methodist Preachers' Annuitant Society, or Legalized Fund. This institution not having been placed on a legal form, the annual subscriptions of the preachers and their friends had been applied to various contingencies in the connection. However laudable this might be in promoting so great and good a work, it left the worn-out preachers and their widows in painful doubt as to the permanency of their future support. This excited the serious attention of some of the junior preachers; and after several private conversations, one of them mentioned the subject to Mr. Roberts; his views and feelings corresponding with theirs,—that, considering the growing state of the connection and the probable increase of annuitants, something should be done to form and legally establish a permanent fund. Such was the cordial feeling of his mind for his aged brethren and their widows, placed in less favourable circumstances than himself, that he spontaneously offered a donation of fifty pounds to

commence with, and any other support he might be able to give. This being mentioned to several of the brethren, a meeting was convened, at which himself, Dr. Clarke, and several other influential preachers attended. After much deliberation, in which he bore a principal part, resolutions were entered into, rules formed, and himself and Dr. Clarke appointed treasurers. These rules were registered as the law required, by his application to the quarter sessions, held for the city and county of Bristol, July 15th, 1799. To the accuracy of this statement the writer can bear witness, as he received and carried Mr. Roberts's benevolent proposal to his brethren, with his warm and ardent wishes, that efficient measures might be adopted to accomplish the much-desired object. How much he appreciated this institution, for his brethren's sake, was evinced by his watchful care over it, and the faithful discharge of the duties of treasurer, till, through his growing infirmities, he found it necessary to resign the office. His reflections on the part he took were to him always gratifying and consolatory. A circumstance which occurred but a short time before his death, and which was not fully understood at the time, excited a little temporary painful feeling; but, however he might err in judgment, he evinced his constant and ardent affection. Having sustained the loss of the principal part of his property, which will be more particularly mentioned in its place, he suggested to a friend the idea of receiving a portion of the arrears which might be considered due to him from this fund; but, as he afterward privately stated to his friend who records it, not for his own personal appropriation, but it not being in his power to leave any thing to the fund, which he had long purposed to do, he thought by this he might have the honour of expressing his regard for the institution and his brethren by a bequest to the amount made in his last will; but concluded, with

great meekness of spirit, by saying, "Perhaps the desire arose from something not in accordance with humility, therefore the gratification was not permitted." The sincerity and goodness of his motive cannot be doubted, and he drew even from this disappointment a profitable conclusion.

In the year 1801-2 he published several anonymous pamphlets, in reply to some aggressive and slanderous misrepresentations of Methodism, by persons of literary celebrity in his native county and that of Somerset, in which he wielded the polemical sword with judgment and ability. His opponents, feeling the keenness of the edge, and sharpness of the point, retired from the field with no achievement of honour to their sacred office or literary character. Few things would more completely rouse his mind to action than slanderous misrepresentations of Methodism and its venerable founder. They ever lay near his heart, and were deeply entwined in his tenderest affections; believing, as he did, that Mr. Wesley was specially commissioned by the Lord, as one of the greatest reformers the world ever knew, and that the doctrines preached, and system of discipline in operation, if maintained in their divine simplicity and purity, were ordained by the special providence of God to be important instruments in the evangelization of the world. He also published a poem, entitled "*Carmen Seculare*," which does no small credit to the poetic powers of his mind, and the devout feelings of his heart; also a sermon preached in King-street chapel, Bristol, on the day of thanksgiving for the general peace. The sentiments of this excellent sermon are expressive of his political and loyal principles. The text, "God save the king," whether considered as the announcement of the joyous congratulations of loyalty, or fervent effusions of prayer to the almighty King of kings for every blessing of salvation, civil and religious, he hesi-

tated not to pronounce with cheerful and devout accent. This he considered in accordance with, and enjoined by, the Christianity of the New Testament. He not only approved of the great principles of the civil constitution of his country, but enjoined Christian submission to "the powers that be." And for the ecclesiastical Establishment he indulged a respectful regard, most cordially approving of her Liturgy, which he preferred as part of the morning service in our chapels, and which, wherever introduced, he read with great devotional solemnity. These principles being early inculcated on his mind by him whom he deemed it his honour to call father in the gospel, he steadily adhered to them.

Mr. Roberts, from the period of his second marriage, entered upon a scene the most gratifying;—living in the enjoyment of temporal affluence, surrounded by an intelligent, pious, and harmonious domestic circle; moving in a sphere adapted to, and which gave full scope to, the increase of ministerial talents; held in high estimation by the most respectable of all denominations, and sincerely loved and blessed among the people of his choice. While of his abundance he devised liberal things, and cheerfully rendered his gratuitous aid to the societies and congregations, he received a rich reward into his own bosom, and many instances of the efficacy of his labours. The only interruption he appeared to have to the full tide of enjoyment and happiness, was the loss of his children, who, in succession, as they entered into life, were conveyed by guardian angels to the arms of Him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me." Mr. Roberts had learned obedience and resignation by the things he had suffered; and though, as an affectionate father, he was anxiously desirous of a family, yet he bowed in submission to the divine will. On the 15th of April, 1804, the wheel of kind Providence, which had moved onward so smoothly,

retrograded, and he was once more plunged into sorrow by the sudden and unexpected removal of his beloved partner. The writer of this had, a day or two before, spent a considerable time in conversation with her, when she appeared unusually communicative, cheerful, and quite as well as might be expected, being near her confinement. The conversation was principally on the subject of Christian experience, living by faith in Christ, its influence in relation to communion with God, the fulfilment of divine promises, increasing holiness, spiritual consolation, and encouraging anticipations of a blissful immortality. He heard no more of Mrs. Roberts till the mournful event had occurred. On the sabbath-day, while reading prayers in Portland chapel, he was abruptly informed that she was no more. Being deeply affected at the afflictive tidings, he was incapable of articulation; the congregation arose from their knees; every countenance expressive of solicitude to know the cause. After a short pause, it was intimated that information of the decease of a much-loved friend had just been received. All the family being absent, it was immediately conjectured who that friend was. Every heart appeared to melt, and every eye was suffused with tears. As soon as he could conclude the solemn service, for such it was,—and, what was remarkable, he had fixed upon those words, being part of the first lesson, for his text, “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his,”—he hastened to his friend. The scene of sorrow was overwhelming: Mr. Roberts was laid prostrate in agonizing grief; only convulsive groans and deep sighs could be heard, though there was evidently, in the midst of this anguish of spirit, a holy struggling of soul to get to the foot of the throne of the God of help. All was in solemn silence, except the responding sighs of deep sympathy. When he was able to articulate, he exclaimed, “O, my friend, what have I

done?" He fervently prayed for divine support and resignation to the mysterious and afflictive dispensation. What added to the poignancy of his grief was, on his beloved wife being taken ill, he hastened for assistance, but before he could return, the kindred spirit had fled to rest and glory; so that he had not even one valedictory expression from the lips which had so often consoled and even instructed him. But he had this consolation, that, in this affliction, he was not, as before, bereft of all: the Lord had graciously left him a lovely boy. The funeral was attended by numerous ministers and friends. Her remains were deposited with her six children in the family vault at Portland chapel, where a monument is placed to her memory. Funeral sermons were preached by the Rev. J. Pawson and others; and a memoir of her was published in the Methodist Magazine for the year 1809. Though much is said of her, much more might have been recorded. Her natural disposition was sweet and amiable. She was warm and faithful in her friendship, cheerful and pleasing in her conversation. She lived habitually in the exercise of that faith in Christ which works by love, and purifies the heart; was assiduous in the means of grace, and ever ready to do good. Her piety, devotion, benevolence, and profiting, appeared to all; and few persons ever shared more largely in the esteem of those who had the pleasure of her acquaintance, or were more sincerely lamented. Such a loss was deeply felt by the bereft husband: though he remained for a season almost inconsolable, he stood admonished by the recollection of former circumstances, and endeavoured by devout restraint to keep in subjection his strong and more than ordinarily sensitive feelings; looking by faith to Jesus, that he might, out of his fulness, receive sanctifying grace, and, like the Captain of his salvation, be made perfect through consecrated sufferings.



Mr. Roberts, ever finding a solace in the affectionate sympathy, counsel, and devout supplications of his brethren at the throne of grace, attended the ensuing conference in London, and received those expressions of tender cordiality which soothed the anguish of his soul. He preached one of the conference sermons : the subject was, "According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought !" A review of the work of God, and especially as displayed in the history of Methodism, which to him, by the love he bore it, was very familiar, he considered a subject of grateful admiration, and a stimulus to future exertion and hopeful prosperity. An unction from above accompanied the word spoken ; the sermon was highly approved by his brethren, and published by the request of the conference. His spirit being graciously refreshed, he once more took unto himself the sword of the Spirit and the armour of God with renewed courage. He was appointed the second year to Bath.

After his return from London, his never-failing friend, Dr. Coke, visited him ; and, early in the year 1805, they made a tour into Devonshire and Cornwall. Preaching in his native town brought juvenile scenes into review ; and the overflowing congregations he had there, as well as in other places, with the fervent piety of his Cornish friends, had a happy tendency in restoring his former tone of feeling, and his ministerial energies. Soon after their return, he had the gratification of bestowing the hand of the pious Miss Smith (for so she was justly called) on the doctor. The happiness of this union led the doctor, who saw the liability of his friend to fall into paralyzing dejection, earnestly to advise him once more to enter into the marriage state. Mr. Roberts, believing it would contribute, not only to his domestic comfort, which greatly required it, but also to his usefulness in the church, acceded, espe-

cially as a kind Providence had directed him to a lady, loved and approved of all, whose piety and amiable disposition were particularly adapted to his present circumstances. The parties having sought the Lord by solemn prayer on the momentous subject, and having just reason to believe that their intended union was in accordance with the divine will, this much-desired and afterward happy event took place between him and Miss Jane Lee, the second daughter of the late Benjamin Lee, Esq., of Merrion, near Dublin, in Queen-square chapel, Bath, on the first of October following. She also was the intimate friend of the late Mrs. Roberts; and in proof that this union received the affectionate approval of her family, the marriage ceremony was performed by the Rev. Mr. Randolph, brother of the late Mrs. Roberts.

Though Mr. Roberts's sufferings had been great in the privations and bereavements to which he had been subjected, he felt that he had great cause for gratitude to God for these invaluable gifts; for no one was ever more favoured, or more specially blessed of the Lord, in the varied and successive partners of life, and few men ever more fully exemplified the apostle's precept, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church; so ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." Mr. Roberts's attention and interest were much excited in the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the rules and regulations of which, with the first annual report, were published about this time, and presented the appearance of an attractive twinkling star, which many bigoted opponents sought to obscure, or pluck from its orbit. He was among those who united their best energies, pecuniary aid, and influential talents in promoting it; and was generally found on the platforms in forming auxiliary and branch societies, or at the succeeding anniversaries, in almost every place through the range of the

sphere of his labours. None felt greater interest in seeing this magnificent institution rise in splendour, extending its beneficent influence to the various nations of the earth, speaking in their varied languages, and proclaiming the wonderful works of God. He beheld with hallowed joy that twinkling star rise into the splendour of the sun as the centre of conciliation and Christian union, shedding a heavenly influence on its multiplied satellites, and, by the instrumentality of the Holy Bible, the book of God, and its extensive distribution, on the dark parts of the earth. Only those who were intimately acquainted with him could know the admiration and heartfelt joy with which he beheld the rapidly extending influence of this institution.

Mr. Roberts's mind being deeply impressed with the manifold mercies of God, he preached at the watch-night which closed the year 1805, in King-street chapel, Bath, from, "He thanked God, and took courage." He reviewed, with profitable interest, the all-sufficiency of grace, administered in the season of affliction, and the abounding goodness and mercy which had crowned the year, as a ground of humble affiance in God, in relation to the future; which was responded to by the congregation in the spirit of praise and thanksgiving. His labours were continued to the Bath circuit during the following year, 1806. On the 13th of April he preached a funeral sermon in the same chapel, on the triumphant death of the venerable John Pawson; which was published in the Magazine for that year, and also in a separate pamphlet. On this occasion he remarks,—“To this kind father in Christ I am deeply indebted for his unwearied and tender sympathies in the afflictive bereavement of 1804.” In making this affectionate acknowledgment to one he loved and venerated, he refers to the venerable primitive fathers of Methodism, whom he ever held in the highest estima-

tion. He would often speak of their athletic powers of body and mind, their natural and acquired qualifications, unquenchable zeal, Herculean labours, and extensive usefulness, and of their special adaptation to the times in which the great Head of the church had raised them up. Many of them he personally knew, of whom he would relate interesting anecdotes in a manner which gave them yet greater interest. He never was more at home in his social circle than on those subjects. Indeed, "good old Methodism," in its godly simplicity, was his home; under God his heart and treasure were there. In the latter end of this year he was visited with a severe affliction; his life was in great jeopardy; but he states, "that he was kept in perfect peace, and humbly resigned to the will of his heavenly Father." He was reduced so low that he was for some time incapable of any public exercise, or even of writing; but his mind was engaged in active and profitable meditation,—composing several pieces both in prose and verse, which he dictated to Mrs. Roberts, who acted as his amanuensis, intending them only for his own perusal and spiritual benefit.

Having resumed his ministry on the first day of 1807, in acknowledgment of the tender mercy of God in his restoration, and for the multiplied blessings of the past year, he preached from, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." In reference to past changes, this was an appropriate expression of the effusions of his own heart for the protracted goodness and mercy of God, and which he was desirous his people should unite with him in recording in the house of the Lord; and in reference to the future, goodness and mercy did follow him in copious streams through the succeeding year, in his labours in the Downend circuit, and other places too numerous to mention, the streams of refreshing by the Spirit

flowing into his own soul; for he often drank of "the brook by the way, and lifted up the head."

At the conference of 1808 he was appointed to Carmarthen, but was prevented, by circumstances he could not control, from attending his station till the latter end of March following. His friends, however, who were anxious, and thought it long ere they could once more give him a joyous welcome to South Wales, were abundantly recompensed by his remaining with them the principal part of the four following years. In the autumn of this year he engaged to visit Ireland. Mrs. Roberts accompanying him, they took Madeley in their way, and were delighted, as he expresses it, to spend a short though profitable season with that most intelligent, pious "mother in Israel," Mrs. Fletcher, whose praise is in all the churches. From thence he visited several parts of North Wales, in company with the Rev. Owen Davies, sowing the incorruptible seed of life in every place as he passed. On his arrival in Dublin, a return of his former indisposition rendered him unable to preach more than a few times; which he greatly regretted, but bowed to the divine will, endeavouring to render himself useful in the domestic circle of Mrs. Roberts's kind relatives. On his return to Bristol, the place where his family now resided, he opened a new chapel at Blagdon, where, with others, he had fought a good fight in defence and support of the doctrines of faith, and the institutions by which they were promoted. He received this as a trophy of holy victory. The plain useful sermon he preached on the occasion was published for gratuitous distribution. In it he made honourable mention of that greatly distinguished, philanthropic, and literary female, Mrs. Hannah More, whom he knew, by whose benevolent exertions a charity school had been formed, supported, and usefully carried on, in this neighbourhood. He also soon after, in union with the

Rev. Joseph Benson, opened the Southwark chapel, London. During this year (1808) he published a pamphlet, which he entitled "Hymnology," the object of which was to call attention to, and show the necessity of, a supplement to the large hymn-book generally used in the connection. This interesting and well-written pamphlet may be read with great interest by all who wish for information on the special design and excellence of that collection, and of the obligation and profitable exercise of that department of divine worship. No person indulged a higher opinion of this collection for its genuine poetry, sound divinity, depth of experience, and devotional sublimity. He thought Mr. Charles Wesley to be the best writer of hymns of the eighteenth century. "None," says he, "ever drank deeper from the fountain of poetic inspiration;" and though no collection of hymns ever presented to the public was so well adapted to devotional purposes, or contained so clear a view of Christian experience, he thought that a considerable number of them were more adapted to private and select devotion, than for promiscuous congregational worship. Under the influence of these impressions he entered on the formation and compilation of a supplementary hymn-book, and for this purpose obtained by contract the manuscripts of the late Charles Wesley from his venerable widow, and was in correspondence with Mr. Samuel Wesley to revise the collection of sacred music which the venerable founder of Methodism used, and emphatically called "the good old tunes." Mr. Roberts, who had some taste for music, was a great admirer of them, as in strict harmony with the solemnity of the services of the house of God, and was jealous lest they should be superceded by light and frivolous airs. He was anxious to accomplish the above, which he conceived to be of importance to the connection; and for this purpose collected from the before-named manuscripts, and

other approved poets, a considerable number of hymns, adding several of his own composition. The particular reasons of his not carrying his laudable design into effect have passed away from the recollection of the writer of this, though he might be in possession of them at the time. This must be regarded as an effort of his unwearied solicitude as far as in him lay to promote, according to his judgment, any and every department of the connection.

That Mr. Roberts was possessed of poetic genius and talent no one can doubt; but in what class of poets he ranged must be left for impartial criticism to determine. Many of his published pieces, and also those in manuscript, display great refinement of taste and elevation of thought, beauty of figure and harmony of numbers; as his "Carmen Seculare;" "The Inquiry," inscribed to W. S. Guinness, A. B.; several of his Odes, published in the Methodist Magazines; and the "Elegy and paternal Tribute to the Memory of the late Mrs. Guinness." Though he wrote numerous hymns and pieces, it was rather as a matter of relaxation than close study. The hymns which proceeded from his pen, mostly by the request of friends, for charity and Sunday schools, missionary-meetings, festivals, watch-nights, funeral solemnities, &c.; and those in the selection published for the use of the intercession prayer-meetings, held in Bristol in behalf of the nation during the war; show considerable poetic powers. They embody lofty sentiments of adoration and praise; for they were the glowing effusions of piety.

February 5th, 1809, Mr. Roberts observes that he took a solemn leave of his dear Bristol friends at the public union prayer-meeting, in an address from, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen!"

He had felt great interest in this union of ministers and congregations of different denominations, and also in the friendly breakfast-meetings of the ministers, held at each other's houses in rotation once a month, as he conceived they were calculated to break down the partition-wall of sectarian prejudices, and to promote conciliation among Christians in general, and brotherly love among ministers of Christ. He had the great satisfaction of seeing their object attained in an almost unexampled degree in that city. The prayer-meetings were popular and numerous attended, and not unfrequently, by the united prayers of ministers, accompanied by a heavenly unction. The breakfast-meetings brought the stated, and other ministers visiting Bristol, into friendly contact; which often led to mutual counsel and edifying conversation, exemplifying the truth of the inspired declaration, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

On his journey to, and arrival in, Carmarthen, he says, a thousand pleasing and painful recollections presented themselves of scenes of former enjoyments and sufferings; and nothing supported him but the conviction of his being in the will of his heavenly Master. He opened his divine commission by preaching from, "That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and with you be refreshed." Indeed here, and with his beloved friends in other parts of South Wales, he was truly loved and respected. Among a more interesting and desirable circle of friends,—ever affectionately solicitous to promote his comfort and that of his endeared family,—kind Providence could not have placed him. Reciprocal Christian love never failed with them; he was happy, believing he had come to them by the will of God. But even here affliction awaited him. Soon after his arrival he visited Tenby, being desirous that the numerous English and Irish visitors, with the English part of the inhabitants, should be



accommodated with the ministry of the word. He had built them a chapel, and for a time contributed to the support of a preacher, and had long been desirous of imparting to them the word of life in person. He afterward spent some time there with much satisfaction, sowing the good seed of divine truth, in hope it would bring forth fruit after many days, and appear to his joy in the day of harvest. He also visited his old friends at Haverfordwest and other places, with mingled feelings and excitements, such as it is natural to suppose would arise on being reminded, by the sight of persons and places, of past joys and sorrows. These appear, however, to have been sanctified to himself and his ministry. What gave great additional pleasure to Mr. Roberts during his residence and visits in Wales, was the great revival of religion which had taken place both in the north and south. The Lord had raised up a number of young men as missionaries, with gifts and qualifications for the work, burning with Christian zeal for the glory of God and the conversion of their countrymen; and preaching with great power and success in their vernacular tongue the unsearchable riches of Christ. Of this he could not be a passive observer, but must participate in their labour and joy. He accordingly took a missionary tour late in the autumn, through several counties, with his friend the Rev. Owen Davies, the general superintendent of this mission, having double lectures, in Welsh and English, in all the principal places. This incessant labour, with crowded congregations and great excitement, was too much for his feeble frame. He was carried home very ill; in which illness he lingered for a considerable time, and was not able to preach again, till he, in union with Messrs. Treffry and Davies, held the watch-night at the close of the year, and that by a special effort, as he was then so weak as to be obliged to be assisted into the chapel; but the "spirit

was willing." He took his part; and, as he says, was most graciously assisted. They had mutually agreed to take the same text, "My times are in thy hands," and each to take their part. This excited great interest; a holy solemnity attended the service, such as will be remembered in the day of the Lord Jesus. The discourses were afterward published, and concluded with a hymn, penned by Mr. Roberts for the occasion. His indisposition continuing, he was earnestly recommended by his physician to spend some time in Bath, as he had generally found the waters beneficial. Being considerably recovered in his health, he attended the conference held in London in 1810, and, by the appointment of the president, gave the address to the young men who had passed their probation and examination, and were received into full connection. His mind was deeply affected in the discharge of this important duty. He chose for his text, "Hold fast the form of sound words;" and observes, he felt much impressed with the utility of the object he recommended,—a firm adherence to the good old cause, as it was in the beginning. By the request of conference, the address was published in the Magazine. He says of this conference in a letter to a friend, "It has been a laborious, but a delightful and profitable, season; love and unity have prevailed; the Head of the church has favoured us with his special presence; accounts from every quarter are pleasing; we have a good increase, and the prospects are fair throughout the connection."

Whenever Mr. Roberts recovered a little, he was ready for work, and sometimes rather too precipitant. The little strength he had gained at Bath, he lost by a hasty journey with his friends Dr. Clarke and J. Butterworth, Esq., into Cornwall. He had a severe relapse, and was again reduced to extreme debility. Of this affliction he writes: "I am now forbidden preaching; and when it

comes to this, it seems scarcely desirable to have my useless life prolonged ; yet I have ties, not only those that are founded on consanguinity, but I love whom our divine Master deigned to call his brother, sister, mother. Well, if awhile separated from them, it will not be for ever,—we shall meet in the abode of the blessed, and more enjoy them there.” His recovery was so slow that he was not able to reach Carmarthen till Christmas-eve. He could not, however, pass the joyous advent of his divine Lord’s nativity in silence. He preached the next day from, “Immanuel.” The attempt which was made the ensuing spring, by Lord Sidmouth’s bill, to abridge religious liberty, but which, as overruled by the providence of God, only tended to enlarge it, occasioned a sermon by him on the subject, from Isaiah lxvi, 5, preached at the South Wales district-meeting, and published by the request of the brethren. As the warm friend of loyalty, he was equally the ardent, generous friend of liberty, civil and religious.

Though he made several attempts to rally, by short excursions, his health continued to suffer, and his spirits were bowed down by the long continuation of affliction ; so much so, that his physician assured him and his friends that a residence in Bath was absolutely necessary : that he could not enjoy even moderate health elsewhere for any long continuance. He therefore yielded to necessity, and with no small reluctance prepared to leave his Carmarthen friends, who greatly regretted his removal from them. He commended them to God by preaching from 1 Samuel xii, 23 : “God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.” Such was his great weakness when he commenced his journey, that it was with some difficulty he was taken to the carriage. He, however, commended himself and family to the care and protection of divine Providence ; and in the course of a few days arrived in Bath. Some weeks after, in a

letter to his friend Mrs. Morgan, of Carmarthen, referring to his affliction, he says, "What shall I say of myself? Alas! I am the prisoner of Providence. My lungs, my head, in short, my whole frame, have been heavily afflicted. For the last two days I have imagined myself a little better: but bad is the best: yet, it is not for me to murmur at the wise and (I doubt not) kind dispensation of Him whose I am, unless my heart deceives me; nor do I wish my sufferings less, till he shall be pleased to say, 'It is enough.'" In another letter shortly afterward, he expresses the humble views he indulged of himself, and his confidence alone in the efficacious atonement of his great Redeemer:—"Ten thousand thanks for the tender interest we have in your prayers. May the God of all grace grant your interceding cries to be heard for us, and may your prayers return in tenfold blessings into your own bosom. You wish to know particulars. When the pain (of my last seizure) subsided, it left me exceedingly debilitated. I am again able to drink the waters: how far I may be justified in expecting benefit, I know not; however, all is well. - The infinitely wise One cannot err, nor can a living man be justly permitted to complain. Alas! what am I? It is only because His compassions fail not, that I am not consumed: because I hope in His mercy, it is therefore, and therefore only, I expect to escape everlasting burnings. O, what a mercy that the unsearchable wisdom of God, glorifying equally both his justice and his grace, should exhibit in his glorious gospel the new and living way! And O, what a way! Through the veil of the flesh of the incarnate Immanuel! O, may I incessantly press by it to the mercy-seat, and obtain a satisfying sense of mercy, and a rich supply of grace, to help my manifold infirmities in time of need! For the last two days I have had a warm interest in the prayers of Dr. and Mrs. Coke, and Mr. and Mrs. Brackenbury, who have been with us."

His excessive debility precluded him in a great measure from public labours or preaching, except occasionally in the school-room, and in the penitentiary; but it was reviving and consolatory to his mind that he could still do a little for the Lord.

In the following May, 1812, Mr. Roberts's health being a little improved, he joined Dr. Coke in opening the new chapel at Frome, in which he felt his heart, from a consciousness of the divine presence, in accordance with the sentiment of his text,—“This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” Soon after this he visited and preached in Weymouth and the Island of Portland, and assisted Mr. Brackenbury in opening a new chapel at Wyehampton. At the conference, 1812, his name was put down as supernumerary for Bath, where it was continued the succeeding years. In writing to a friend, he observes, in reference to this, “I have been indisposed; but am at present very tolerable, and able to do a little now and then in the labours of the ministry. I am admitted into society,” (meaning, he had received his quarterly ticket as a member, which before had not been required, his previous appointments having been pastoral,) “and made the leader of a class. This has been, I will assure you, a subject of exceeding great exercise to me: I shrink from its importance; but hitherto my flock bear with me. May I be enabled to imitate the ‘good Shepherd.’” The resolution he now formed was, that, so far as the Lord should give him health and strength, he would be at any and every call to enter into any open doors of usefulness which might present themselves; for this he considered his providential calling, to be the servant of all for Christ's sake. In the ensuing spring, 1813, he accompanied his friend the Rev. Joseph Entwisle to Bridport, Exeter, and Honiton, to open new chapels. He also attended the anniversary meeting of the Bristol British

and Foreign Bible Society, as the representative of the Bath auxiliary; and in London, those of the Sunday School Union, and the Dissenters' meeting for the protection of religious liberty; in each of which he took part, and was received with great affection and Christian courtesy.

The principal occasion of his visit to London at this time was the liberal and laudable effort made by Christians of all denominations, by petitions to both houses of parliament, for the removal of impediments to the introduction of Christianity into India. He was honoured by being the bearer of a petition from the city of Bath, one from the Methodists in Bristol, and several from other parishes in Somersetshire. This business, which engaged his ardent and assiduous attention, occupied him much time and labour, in obtaining the interest and effective influence of members of both houses in favour of the petitions, which he accomplished much to his satisfaction.

Mr. Roberts, having suffered for some time from increasing weakness of sight, availed himself of this opportunity of consulting an eminent oculist; and the disease was pronounced a confirmed cataract. Here he met his constant friend Dr. Coke; and he states that for the several weeks they spent together, he witnessed the doctor's burning zeal and ardent wish to establish a mission to Asia.

Though reluctant to part with his friend, and the more so on account of his importance to the missions already established in various parts, he was so convinced of the necessity of such a mission, that he promised the doctor to render him all the assistance in his power, and also that he would attend the ensuing conference, and assist him in obtaining the consent and co-operation of his brethren. He accordingly attended the conference at Liverpool. Finding that some difficulty was likely to

attend the accomplishment of the doctor's wishes, being appointed to preach on the Lord's-day morning, he selected for his text Psalm lxxvii, 17-19. He thus endeavoured to redeem his pledge to the doctor, as well as by supporting the subject in the conference when it was brought forward by the doctor, in one of the noblest and most eloquent speeches he ever delivered. Many reasons, however, appeared to turn the scale against the doctor's wishes; such as the necessity of the continuance of his services at home, and the hazardous nature of the undertaking for one of such an advanced age.

Mr. Roberts observes, he felt exceedingly distressed at the course the conference appeared likely to pursue, and he pleaded in behalf of the doctor to the total exhaustion of his physical strength. The Rev. Messrs. Reece, Bunting, and Atmore, were also nobly firm. The latter, the next morning, moved a reversion; and the conference at length agreed, on certain conditions, to which the good doctor acceded, professing himself satisfied with the limited permission he had obtained.

Thus was a great and effectual door to the eastern world opened to Wesleyan Methodism, through which many (though very disproportionate to the extent of the field) have entered to successful labour. Mr. Roberts never reflected upon this, and on the part he had taken in procuring legal permission for the residence of Christian missionaries in India, without joyous satisfaction, and much gratitude to God.

The following autumn he visited Ireland; which he was the more anxious to do because of the shortness of his former stay, and of his indisposition most of the time he was there. This visit he prolonged with great acceptance to the people, and much satisfaction and profit to himself. He observes, he commenced what might be called his year in the Dublin circuit, September 19th, 1813, by

preaching at Whitefriar-street chapel from 1 John i, 3, and the following Lord's day at Wesley chapel, from Habakkuk iii, 2. Winter coming on with more than usual rigour, he was prevented from making those excursions into the country which he had intended; but he had constant opportunities of preaching in Dublin, and of lecturing in Mr. Guinness's family.

In the spring he visited Drogheda and Tullamore, assisted in opening a new chapel in each place, and at the former held a missionary meeting. He also visited Moate, Portaferry, and Athlone, and assisted in forming a missionary society for the district at Tullamore. These visits brought into review the early part of his ministry, when it was the day of small things with them; and he could not but devoutly exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" He expresses the great pleasure he had in meeting his Irish brethren in the conference, which was held in Dublin; observing their fervent zeal and piety, and the improving position in which they were placed, with the hopeful prospect of extending usefulness.

After the conference he visited the west of Ireland. He states that he was happy once more to behold the faces of some remaining friends in the city of Cork: many had gone into the world of spirits, of whom it might be truly said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." He took in his way the beautiful lakes of Killarney; preached in that town, and twice in Limerick; and then returned to Dublin, where, on September 18th, he preached his last sermon from Philippians i, 27. This visit had a most salutary effect both on body and mind; the kind attentions of his amiable relatives, and the warm cordiality of all the pious people in Dublin, were a balm to his heart; and he was able with scarcely any intermission to use exercise and preach the whole time.

Soon after his return to Bath he received the very



affecting tidings of the greatly lamented death of his much loved and revered friend Dr. Coke, who, in the prosecution of his glorious enterprise to Ceylon and continental India, suddenly finished his course. With this mournful event Mr. Roberts was much affected, and deeply sympathized with the little band of missionaries who had accompanied him, and the missionaries in general, who were bereft of their affectionate, faithful, and indefatigable father. He preached and published a funeral sermon as a tribute of respect to his departed friend, from, "He was a burning and a shining light,"—which he dedicated to Robert Carr Brackenbury, and John Halloway, Esqs., who were with himself executors in trust to the doctor's will. He passes a high eulogium upon him from his own observation and knowledge, as a man, a Christian, and a minister; and, with peculiar brilliancy and force of delineation, applies the epithet, "He was a burning and a shining light." He was not an ordinary luminary; he burned with vigorous fervour; he shone with brilliant lustre; especially in his glorious missionary career. Their friendship had been sincere and constant for more than twenty years.

Such was the confidence which the doctor placed in Mr. Roberts's friendship and counsel, that he consulted him on most, if not all, his important plans, and applied to him for his aid in several instances of pressing pecuniary emergency, and which he finally confirmed in the implicit confidence he placed in him as one of his executors in trust. The expression of his warm friendship, in a letter to Mr. Roberts, is deserving of notice: "There is no medium with me, I was almost going to say, no moderation, in friendship. For you, my dear sir, I feel greater friendship than for any other man upon the earth, except, perhaps, Mr. Brackenbury: in respect to you both, I cannot determine the point." The fulfilment of this important trust

cost Mr. Roberts much trouble and anxiety ; but to this he submitted with pleasure, as he considered the trust sacred, and the service rendered to the Lord, the property being principally left to be applied to the promotion of the missionary cause, and the furtherance of the gospel at home.

He had a mind susceptible of all the fine feelings of friendship ; and, when once formed, of unshaken fidelity and constancy. On this subject he observes, in a letter to a friend : " It is impossible to reflect on your exceedingly afflictive condition without feeling no inconsiderable interest, and suffering by sympathetic participation. This is the penalty friendship must pay for enjoying her pleasures ; be it so. If to pay it, costs one's eye a tear, it is no equivalent : the pleasures infinitely outweigh the pains ; and a few tears shed occasionally may not be compared with the constant current of delight which flows in the heart where true friendship has opened its blissful fountain, especially if our Elisha—the true extensive salvation of God (for so Elisha signifies)—has cast into it his hallowing, healing grace, and cured it of its carnal curse." This was a practical principle with Mr. Roberts, which the writer of this memoir, through the course of years, often witnessed ; but in few instances more strongly marked than in his constant friendship to the doctor, and that in paying the last tribute of respect to this great and good man of God, to whose memory they were appointed by the conference to place a monument, in connection with those of his relatives, in the parish church of Brecon, his native town.

Mr. Roberts, notwithstanding his complicated afflictions, hazarded two or three journeys from Bath to that town, in order to co-operate in accomplishing the desired object ; which being executed to the satisfaction of all parties, he expressed himself highly gratified at the completion of this last tribute of honourable respect to his greatly beloved

and much lamented friend; and the more so, as it was raised by the special request of the brethren, and the expense defrayed by their private contributions, as an expression of their individual affection and veneration.

Mr. Roberts had been for many years placed by kind Providence in circumstances of considerable affluence, so that he had little care or anxiety about the things of this life. But in temporal ease, he was not unmindful of the poor, especially those of the household of faith. He was ever ready to administer to their necessities; and to contribute to those institutions of Christian charity, which had for their object the amelioration of human suffering, or the mental and moral improvement of mankind, by the diffusion of divine knowledge, and the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ in the conversion of sinners. His heart and his house were ever open to hospitality; he delighted in the entertainment of those who excelled in virtue, and of the ministers of Christ, especially those with whom he laboured in the gospel.

With his colleagues he was always cheerful, communicative, and edifying in conversation. He would enter with feelings of interest into all the minutæ of pastoral care, was ever ready to every good word and work, and ever most sollicitous to promote the comfort and happiness of his brethren. Where he found congeniality of mind he would often enter with great freedom into the subject, manner, and most useful mode of preaching, of which few were better qualified to judge. His general inquiry on the first meeting after the sabbath would be, "What did you preach from? and what the plan of discussion?" On which he would give a most ready communication in reference to himself. Or, on the Saturday, in preparation for the sabbath, "What is your intended text and subject? I have fixed upon —, if it does not interfere with yours." This was the more convenient, as he and some of his

brethren adhered to the good old Wesleyan plan of selecting their text from one of the lessons, psalms, or epistle for the day. It was also profitable, their labours being so much intermixed, and applied to the same congregations. It need scarcely be added, he was a most agreeable companion and fellow-labourer.

Of his deeds of benevolence and Christian charity little comparatively will be known until that day when every man's work shall be revealed, and he that had sown plentifully shall reap plentifully. It was intimated, when speaking of the preachers' fund, that he had suffered great loss in his temporal circumstances, and that at a time when he could the least bear it, having a large family, and being himself a subject of great infirmity. It was his failing,—and it must be acknowledged that most good men have their infirmities,—not to be sufficiently attentive to his own pecuniary affairs, but to place too much confidence in others. He had for many years put the principal part of his property in the hands of one in whom he had unbounded confidence; the companion of his early days, who appeared distinguished for piety and intelligence, and who possessed great influence in the church, and was admired and loved for his amiable manners by all who knew him. To the surprise of every one, and the great distress of many, he became a bankrupt, and so involved Mr. Roberts with himself that he lost all, besides being subjected to many painful difficulties and expenses. He might truly say, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which ate of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." This would, to many, have been overwhelming; and that he felt it keenly for a short time cannot be wondered at; but he was soon borne above the flood, and maintained the cheerfulness of one who did not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from God. The feelings of his heart are most strikingly

and ingenuously expressed in a letter to his friend Mr. Brackenbury :—

“ MY VERY DEAR SIR,—So kind, so tender, so great is the interest you take in every thing concerning me, that I hasten to tell you, that, through the good hand of God upon me, I have been wonderfully upheld and comforted in my unremitting labours ; and I still long, if possible, more than ever for full employment. O, I have lived to no purpose ! Would I could retrieve the past years ! But there is an atoning Sacrifice : this is all my salvation, and all my desire ; and here I rest my hopes and fears, —my all. What I felt the morning you left us was an agony not unmixed with some feelings of the consoling kind. I was not so lost to all feeling of gratitude, as to forget that your kindness brought you to us, and you had given me such inexpressible ease in permitting me to make your heart the repository of my sorrows. Let the days of darkness be ever so many, ‘ God is light,—God is love ! ’ What glorious news from the four quarters of the globe ! Now it begins to appear what an instrument our late friend Dr. Coke was in the hands of the Lord, as the great missionary leader ; and now is fulfilled, ‘ But they shall see,’ and now all acknowledge it. As to myself, what mercies are mingled with all my trials ! I am all wonder ; I can draw no conclusion ; for, in truth, I am puzzled at every thing, and can see nothing but what blinds me the more : but soon I shall ‘ see out of obscurity ;’ after all, ‘ the Lord reigneth.’ I shall add no more, only to beg earnestly an interest in your breathings before the throne, that my faith may not fail, that I may ‘ true in the fiery trial prove.’ With a thousand sentiments of faithful affection, I remain, my dear sir, your ever devoted friend,

“ THOMAS ROBERTS.”

The thick clouds of providential darkness which totally eclipsed the objects of vision, led Mr. Roberts into a further trial of his faith, for which the premonitory admonition of his divine Lord had prepared him: "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction," not as a mark of divine displeasure, but of paternal wisdom and love, which will appear when God becomes his own interpreter in the light of eternity. This was the sure anchorage of his hope and patient endurance, while passing through the furnace of a more than ordinary heat, knowing that the trial of his faith was more precious than that of gold, though tried in the fire, that it might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

It has been already intimated that he had for some time suffered from a diminution of sight: during his last visit to Ireland he entirely lost the sight of one eye, and the other was considerably affected. In the beginning of the following year (1816) it totally failed. Being encouraged by the gentlemen of the faculty to undergo an operation, he proceeded to London for that purpose, and engaged the skilful aid of J. Travers, Esq., an eminent oculist. The 7th of March was the day fixed upon, when public meetings for prayer were held in his behalf in Bristol, Bath, and Carmarthen; besides which, he was remembered by many of his friends in their special approaches to the throne of grace. So true it is "that the fervent and effectual prayers of the righteous avail much," and that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick." The support he received during the operation was most extraordinary, as he who records it can testify, being with his friend in this time of suffering and of need. He sat with calm placidity and amazing firmness during this painful trial, without so much as an expression of hesitance or suffering, and with an unshaken confidence in Him who gives sight to the blind, that he would bless the means employed to the

restoration of his sight. It was done to him according to his faith; for, in six weeks he returned to Bath, to the joy of his friends, and appeared again in the pulpit of King-street chapel, where, with thanksgiving to God, he read, "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind. The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down. The Lord loveth the righteous;" from which he preached a most appropriate, affecting, and, it may be added, eloquent sermon, which was afterward published.

The residence and labours of Mr. Roberts during the following years were in Bath and Bristol, as might be most agreeable for domestic convenience, or as he conceived he might be most useful in his public labours. His health, he states to a friend, July 5th, 1817, speaking of himself and family, was greatly improved. "Though we have known sore and heavy affliction, we have much cause for gratitude to the Father of mercies, who, though he has cast us down, has not destroyed us. My health, during the past six months, has been better than for many preceding years; so that I am constantly employed in the good work of the Lord, which is prospering among us." He had many calls, and sometimes made extensive excursions to preach occasional sermons, and to attend missionary anniversaries, in which his soul delighted. In connection with these, a variety of incidents, both pleasing and edifying, might be recorded, would this already lengthened memoir admit of it; but it ought not to be omitted, that, in proof of the estimation in which his talents were held, he was appointed by the committee of the Parent Missionary Society to preach one of the preparatory sermons at the general anniversary meeting, held in the City-road chapel, May 4th, 1818. His text was from Nehemiah ii, 20: "The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build." This sermon was published. It displays great ingenuity, and

glowing, fervid missionary zeal. In its application it does credit to the inventive faculty of the mind that conceived it, to the piety of the heart from whence it flowed, and the ability of the pen which indited it. He most cordially entered into the plan of the formation of missionary societies by public meetings. From the commencement, he and his friend who records it, travelled some hundred miles together in this delightful enterprise; and often did he witness his persuasive and impressive eloquence from the pulpit and platform, and that with pleasurable surprise, knowing his great physical debility. As this is probably the last of his publications which will be mentioned in this memoir, it is remarked with regret that its limits have not allowed more especial notice of their particular merits, or of such extracts as might have been to the edification and spiritual profit of the reader. It is also much to be lamented, that his various publications, in prose and poetry, and his manuscripts, have not been collected and published; which would have been no small acquisition to the theological treasury of that section of the church of Christ of which he was so long an active member and zealous minister.

Though Mr. Roberts had been personally a subject of long, great, and varied affliction, he had enjoyed for some years much pleasurable repose in his growing, interesting family. His love, as a parent, was ardent and indulgent, yet not excessive, but governed by reason and religion. He could relax and bring his mind to the innocent playfulness of children, as well as adapt instruction to their capacities. "Teaching the young idea how to shoot," and guiding the tender mind into correct perceptions of things, especially in the fear of the Lord and religious truth, was often attended with high gratification as well as moral pleasure. He never made religion irksome to them by imposing it as a task or penalty; but with a cheerfulness which attracted attention, without levity, and



a dignified authority which commanded respect, without austerity, he showed them that "her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." "He ruled well his own house, having his children in subjection;" and few parents were more happy in their domestic circle, "all loving and beloved." But they were soon given to know that this stream of domestic enjoyment was to be interrupted;—"that all flesh is grass, and the beauty thereof as the flower of the grass;"—that, though "their sons might be as plants grown up in their youth," they should be cut down in their verdure and beauty. Of this, two mournful instances occurred, which appear greatly to have affected Mr. Roberts's health, and the latter to have contributed in shortening his pilgrimage. In his early domestic life he was very desirous of a family; but the Lord saw it meet to take his children to himself in infancy: one only was left to console him, and was much endeared to him in increasing years, by the amiableness of his disposition and manners, as well as by his dutiful and affectionate deportment; and not only to him, but also to Mrs. Roberts, under whose maternal tender care he was early placed by kind Providence, and in whom he found a mother who watched over him with all the affection which her own children received, and which he always gratefully acknowledged and repaid by the dutiful affection of a son. This son, who bore his maternal family name, Randolph, after receiving a liberal education, was put to the medical profession, in which, a near relative states, he made considerable proficiency; but, in consequence of his close application to study, his lungs became affected, and this affection terminated in pulmonary consumption. Notwithstanding his amiableness, and the religious advantages he enjoyed, he had never experienced that change of heart which is necessary to salvation, nor became decided in his religious character, till, attending a watch-

night, at the close of the year 1819, when he heard the Rev. Joseph Taylor preach a sermon particularly to young people, under which the Holy Spirit deeply convinced him of sin, and the necessity of an interest in Christ by faith. An affectionate letter, written to him by Mrs. Roberts, greatly tended to strengthen those convictions, and encourage him to look to Jesus, as the only Saviour of sinners, by whom he might be justified by faith, and have peace with God. Following the advice thus given him, he sought, and soon found, the blessing which he felt to be necessary both to his comfort and safety, and from which he derived both consolation in affliction, and peaceful triumph in death. Previous to his departure, he addressed his weeping parents, and brothers and sisters, giving to each a token of remembrance, with suitable advice; and, looking affectionately at Mrs. Roberts, said, "You are my spiritual mother." His feeble strength was then quite exhausted; and, after lying for some time in great composure, he calmly fell asleep in Jesus, having attained the twenty-third year of his age.

This was an affecting bereavement to Mr. Roberts: the loss of a son of so much promise was acutely felt, and it was some time before he recovered his physical and mental strength. Indeed, a relative observes, "He felt it so severely as never apparently to recover it." He, however, made a devout surrender of himself and his offspring to God, whose he was, and whom he served. He spent some months during the summer of 1821 in Lincolnshire, with his excellent friend Mrs. Brackenbury, with whom his spirit was greatly refreshed; and the change of air proved, in some degree, restorative to his feeble frame. On his return, he removed to Bristol, on account of his second son, who was placed in a situation there in the medical profession. Here he was again among old and beloved Christian friends, who knew the way the Lord

had led him, and could render to him their kind sympathies and friendly aid. By this he was consoled, and encouraged to labour ; which he did not fail to do according to, and often beyond, his strength. Still considering himself at public command, he would often make his philanthropic excursions ; and when quite exhausted in his heavenly Master's work, he had heartfelt pleasure in saying, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

In the year 1827 he visited Ireland, and attended the conference held at Belfast, by which he was much affected on reviewing the years that were past ; not one being present who was in the ministry when he first visited that kingdom ; and particularly when some of the brethren addressed the throne of grace in his behalf, as their "venerable father in Christ." A favourable opening presenting itself in Bath for the professional practice of his son, he was induced to return there in the year 1828, to contribute to his convenience and comfort, and by his influence to promote his interests. Providence having blighted his sanguine hopes relative to his first son, he became very solicitous that he might realize them in one whose prospects were not less favourable, and who, from the cheerfulness of his disposition, the urbanity of his manners, as well as his medical knowledge, met with a kind reception from those who knew him, and his prospects became increasingly favourable. He, as all young practitioners ought, in the commencement of his career, became decided in his religious character, solemnly devoted himself to the service of God, sought the special blessing and direction of the great and good Physician, and relied on the fulfilment of his faithful promise, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." He also made choice of a pious and amiable companion, the daughter of the late John Morton, Esq., to whom he was married. This was highly

gratifying to Mr. Roberts's parental feelings, and tended to soothe a heart which had so often been pierced by the sword of sorrow. All appeared to move on in domestic harmony and happiness; and, what was the most pleasing to him, all growing in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Though he himself was bowing under increasing infirmities, yet, a little recovered by present prospects, he writes, "I am comparatively convalescent. The last sabbath I occupied the pulpit in Walcot chapel; for I wish to be doing a little in my Lord's vineyard: the audience heard me with no great difficulty, though my voice is exceedingly weak. Benjamin and his wife love the Lord; the rest of my family are all well." Alas! this season of blissful calm was suddenly interrupted by the affliction of this much-loved son, who having taken a severe cold, it terminated in consumption, which baffled all medical skill. He lingered about seven months, perfectly aware of his danger, but fully prepared by that grace which had abounded toward him, and was now revealed in him in pardon, adoption, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Of this he bore a pleasing testimony. A little more than a fortnight before his dissolution, his beloved wife being engaged with him in fervent prayer, he ruptured a blood-vessel: it was thought he was dying; but reviving a little, though not able to speak so as to be heard, he wrote many sentences expressive of his unshaken confidence in Christ, and Christ alone, of which the calmness with which he contemplated his departure was pleasingly indicative. On the morning of his death he was enabled to address the assembled family in an affecting and heavenly manner, speaking separately to each, and requesting he might die with his hand in that of his beloved wife, and that the Testament in which he had written the name of his infant daughter, with a short address, might be the subject of her tuition, that she might meet

him in heaven: then calmly bidding them farewell, he entered into the rest and joy of his Lord.

This very sorrowful event and heavy stroke made a deep impression on Mr. Roberts's whole frame, which had for a long time been declining. Being now fully convinced that the time of his departure was drawing nigh, he resolved upon removing to Bristol, where he had long been desirous of finishing his earthly course. The opinion which he had formed of his state, his devout resignation to the will of God, and the consolation of hope he had in reference to the near approach of eternity, are expressed in one of the last letters he ever wrote with his own hand to the compiler of this memoir, from which the following is a short extract:—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—My heart with warmest emotions of gratitude and esteem offers its best thanks for your affectionate, sympathizing epistle. Assured you will be pleased to have a few lines written by my own hand, let me tell you truly I have equal pleasure in making the attempt to gratify you. The good Lord hath done great things for me, whereof my friend will be glad. My debility is very distressing; and though my pain is slight and unfrequent, I am much reduced. The conclusion of the whole is, in a word,—I think the die is cast for death. I dare not say my wish elevates or depresses the beam; my prayer is, ‘Father, thy will be done.’ He leaves me not. I cling to the cross,—‘for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.’ Mrs. Roberts is divinely upheld, and my children most assiduously minister to my comfort. They are close, but I hope not so close as my blessed Lord.”

The following account of Mr. Roberts, after his removal to Bristol, is furnished by a much-endearred relative:—  
“From that time he sunk rapidly, and was soon confined

to his bed: his weakness was so great as to prevent his entering much into conversation; but when asked respecting the state of his mind, he expressed his hope in a crucified Saviour, and frequently said that he was on a rock, and at peace. At one time he was troubled with distressing doubts and fears; but toward the close he was entirely free from them. He sometimes expressed surprise that he was still living; and one day said to his daughter Susan Jane, 'How is it I am still here? Why will you not all give me up?' She replied, 'My dear papa, we have given you up;' at which he appeared satisfied. He afterward said to Mrs. Roberts, 'What is it detains me on earth? I am still here in answer to your prayers, and those of my children: why will you not let me go?' She answered, 'My love, we have given you up to God; we have no hope of your recovery, and do not now pray for it.' 'Then,' he replied with emphasis, 'I shall soon go home; I shall soon be in heaven.' The last time his eldest daughter (who had been married a short time previously, and resided in Bath) went over to Bristol with her husband to see him, he blessed them both, and prayed that they might be blessed in and through each other. Though for some time he was so weak as to be scarcely able to articulate, he was perfectly sensible to the last; and on the 10th of January, 1832, fell asleep in Christ, leaving a sorrowing widow, one son, and four daughters, to lament the loss of a much-endearred husband, and kindly-affectionate father. He was followed to the grave by all the preachers, travelling and supernumerary, in the Bristol and Bath circuits; and funeral sermons were preached by the Rev. James Wood at Bristol, the Rev. Jacob Stanley at Bath, and the Rev. Robert Smith at Kingswood.

"His removal was much felt and deeply lamented in the cities and their vicinities, where his labours had been so long and so abundantly useful. Many mourned the

loss of a spiritual father ; and thousands that of an able and faithful minister of Christ, by whom they had been instructed, and under whose word they had often sat as in heavenly places ; while many in the blissful mansions of glory would await and hail his triumphant spirit into the transcendent joy of his Lord, to receive the crown of life, and shine forth as the stars in the effulgent firmament of the kingdom of heaven."

The writer of this might say much of this great and good man of God, from long and intimate acquaintance with him ; but refrains, lest, in attempting to do justice to his many excellences, he should be suspected of undue partiality to a much-loved and justly-valued friend. He has to lament the insufficiency of what he has written, to give an adequate delineation of his manifold virtues and pleasing qualities ; and, above all, of the grace which so richly abounded in him ; the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Having attempted to record but little more than a simple narrative of facts, he subjoins the two following testimonies out of many, from persons of respectability and veracity, who had for many years known the subject of this memoir in private and public life. The first is that of a lady of no ordinary intelligence, piety, and just discernment of character :—

"Of Mr. Roberts, it may be justly said, his intelligence and his intellectual powers were great, of higher rank than was generally apprehended ; but he wanted firmness of nerve to grasp them with that commanding energy which would have given an efficiency of equal effort and success. His imagination had a richness and variety which threw around an irresistible charm of improvement and delight. His feelings were very acute,—‘tremblingly alive all over,’ he mourned and sympathized to an almost unheard-of extent. As to his own sufferings and sorrows, they were too numerous, severe, and com-

plicated, not to require a pen of more than ordinary delicacy, in attempting to give but the slightest sketch of them, as they affected him; so that whatever belongs to the interior character will be with difficulty delineated, because so few have trodden the same path with fellow-feeling and close sympathy. Every-day characters are seen, understood, and forgotten; but where rare and variegated combinations are met with, (in some sort sudden,) no small skill is required to analyze and adjust them, so as to give proportionate merit to each, separate excellence. This is peculiarly applicable to Mr. Roberts. There was in him so much talent and worth, as only became discoverable by a minute knowledge of the possessor; and even then the development was not clear and full, unless to minds in unison with his own. This did not arise from any reserve or concealment on his part, but from that generous expansion of soul which instantaneously and imperceptibly joined itself to a kindred spirit, and expatiated in all the luxury of high and pure communication. To such a mind, but to be understood was a luxury of no ordinary kind. 'Thought meeting thought,' in social intercourse, he felt to be a joy transcending any earthly good. He was no stranger to the philosophy of M. Malebranche, but dreaded, and on all occasions avoided, throwing the veil of obscurity over the simplicity of truth. Neither did he invest religion with a mysteriousness farther than is natural to a subject so far beyond the cognizance of mere human reason. Far from it: truth from his lips or pen was Christ and his gospel; and the theme flowed with an ingenuous eloquence from a heart that felt the hallowed fire, and its refining, saving power!"

The following is from the Bath and Cheltenham Gazette, written by a gentleman of literary celebrity, who had been favoured with a long personal knowledge of Mr.



Roberts, and sat under his ministry in Bristol, Bath, and elsewhere :—

“ This amiable man and respected minister, whose decease we recently announced, had been during many years a resident alternately of this and of the neighbouring city, and powerfully promoted the religious interests of both, as well by his labours in the pulpit, as his influential co-operation in various charities, and by the uniform consistency of his private character. Under any circumstances, the narrative of such a life could not fail to be instructive ; and we the more regret the present scantiness of our means of gratifying public curiosity in this instance, because the tenor of such information as we possess indicates a passage through an ordeal unusually varied and trying. Mr. Roberts’s comparatively permanent residence in these parts commenced a few years before the termination of the last century, at which time he was an object of very general attraction, partly for his talents as a preacher, which were then becoming matured, and partly, we must presume, for the novel spectacle of a Wesleyan itinerant surrounded with the appendages of worldly affluence, and distinguished by an elegance of mind and of accomplishments which would have been an ornament to the highest fortune. It was no obscure proof of the solid quality of his mental constitution and spiritual gifts, that, in a situation exposing its tenant so directly both to invidious and seductive influences, he maintained both the affection and esteem of his brethren. Hospitable, affable, and simple in his private conduct ; laborious, steady, and zealous in his ministerial and other duties ; he exerted himself with equal energy and acceptance among colliers and peasants, as before the opulent and refined, and was a valuable servant of the itinerancy in departments where the union of talent and worldly respectability is sought for. No surer criterion of the state of his heart during the pe-

riod of external prosperity need be cited, than the fact of his intimate union of spirit with two men of so decided character as the late Dr. Coke, and Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq., who were more attached to him than perhaps to any other man. It will be in the recollection of many that, when the former died in 1813, on his voyage to introduce the Wesleyan mission into India, his friend was selected to preach his funeral sermon in King-street chapel in this city; when the intense interest of the occasion was manifested by the concourse of the most dense assemblage ever collected within those walls.

“ But the ‘ palmy’ state of fortune was not the only probation through which this ‘ servant of Jesus Christ’ had to pass; nor was it unvaried while it lasted. In the earlier years of an itinerant ministry, commencing about forty-nine years ago, he appears to have ‘ endured hardships’ with the hardest of the ‘ good soldiers’ of that day, and was encouragingly distinguished by the venerable Wesley. The frequent visitations of death in his domestic circle, or circles, (for he was twice a widower, and often bereaved of children,) were, to feelings acute as his, most trying. The vicissitudes of what is called ‘ fortune’ were apparently much less so. But, indeed, the equanimity with which the complicated afflictions of his latter years were undergone, was a continual occasion of sober surprise and useful reflection to his friends. Broken health, gradual extinction of sight; its partial restoration by a painful operation on both eyes; misplaced confidence; the death of a son, about to enter professional life, with cherished and promising expectations; more recently the death of another son in the bloom of wedded and parental felicity and professional hopes;—these were severe trials, sustained by this excellent man with a serenity quite inexplicable but on Christian principles, and the more remarkable for standing in contrast with an almost fastidious delicacy

of feeling, and an ardent and not unaspiring temperament. To these must be added an affliction which seems to appear less tolerable than any other, to a minister zealously devoted to his Master's business,—the tediousness of protracted decay, and comparative uselessness, while the heart and intellect are unimpaired. The whole manner of his last re-appearance at the sacramental table, several months ago, is said to have been deeply affecting. The manifestation of his feelings at that time, and on a few other public occasions, gave intimation of the quality of that support which he required and obtained in his constrained seclusion.

“Unconnected with character, the consideration of talent in a preacher is a light thing, even while he lives ; so vital in regard of the sacred orator is the dependance of the hearer's acquiescence upon the speaker's consistency ; but how much more so, when he is gone to render up his account ! In other cases, talent varnishes over defects of private conduct ; in this, that which is lovely and of good report in the life, veils the imperfections and the beauties of intellectual structure ; and, like a well-adapted dress, at once hides the one and enhances the other. During the vigour of his physical and mental powers, Mr. Roberts enjoyed some of the most enviable requisites for giving effect to pleading in any cause ;—that superior beauty and graceful dignity of person and countenance, which it is more easy to depreciate afterward, than to withstand at the time ; a memory minutely tenacious ; a perfectly ready recollection ; a pleasing and diversified range of fancy ; a natural facility of utterance, and variety of intonation. To these, his exemplary industry supplied the materials for ample elucidation of whatever subject he undertook to unfold. He enforced the Christian doctrines with the authority of one who had not only examined them laboriously as a theologian, but as a scholar, philoso-

phically; and who felt not only their truth, but their beauty and fitness. Grace, rather than power, was his characteristic; but he was often powerful, and his gracefulness was neat and manly. In his exordiums he used a very low tone of voice, which imposed on his hearers a necessity of breathless attention. His main explication was sometimes prolix; the natural effect of his accurate retention of an elaborate scheme, and his readiness to yield to impulse in elucidation. In application, his manner was at once fervid and correct. In week-night lectures also, and on occasions when he had levied a less severe tax than usual upon his industry in the study, the eloquence of his heart, his piety, his knowledge, and cultivation, edified and gratified every hearer.

“In the pulpit, in society, and no less so at home, he appeared to have disciplined himself to recommend that which he regarded as the truth of Christianity, by every amiable adjunct; and, did the limits of a sketch allow, it would be a pleasing task to dilate upon his Christian liberality and amenity, compromising no principle, yet affronting no honest predilection; the delicacy of his hospitable attentions; his wonderful powers in conversation, animated, intellectual, playful, abounding in the most accurate and diversified information and the happiest allusion; his kindness to the young; the warmth of his discriminating friendship; his tenderness as a husband; his indulgence and providence as a parent. His excellences were many; and his defects such as, perhaps, could hardly be detected by an eye strong enough to view his entire character.”

## MR. GEORGE DARBY DERMOTT

---

MR. DERMOTT was born in London, on January 30th, 1759. At an early age he was placed at a boarding school, in the county of York, where he received a classical education ; and was afterward apprenticed to a respectable surgeon and apothecary, at Barnsley, in the same county. Having gone through the regular course of study, and passed his examination at the college of Surgeons, he fixed his residence at Wellingborough, in Northamptonshire, where he continued to practise in every branch of the profession upward of twelve years, with eminent success, among the respectable classes of society in that town and neighbourhood. About three years after he commenced his practice, he entered into a matrimonial alliance with a lady of a truly amiable disposition, and accomplished manners ; but neither of them had enjoyed the advantage of a religious education, nor experienced the power of genuine godliness. They maintained, indeed, a regular attendance on the services of the established Church, which they considered to be their duty, not only on the sabbath, but also on the other days of the week, whenever professional engagements would permit. This they then conceived to constitute the whole of religion ; and they consequently felt no hesitation in following all the amusements of fashionable life. Thus they indulged the propensities of a corrupt nature, till tired with a round of worldly pleasures, which left them no time for sober reflection, they frequently acknowledged to each other, that their amusements were unsatisfactory ; but

how to fill the void they were utterly at a loss to know. There were at that time no Methodists in Wellingborough ; but in the village of Irchester, four miles distant, lived two families, who had formed a small Methodist society, and had regular preaching. Mr. Dermott, when professionally attending these families, had observed something more religious in them in times of affliction than in others ; but as he had never heard the Methodists spoken of as a body excepting in terms of contempt and reproach, he had no thought of becoming one of them, until the following providential occurrence brought them more fully under his notice.

A pious member of the Methodist society, living at a distant town, (whose father had been a surgeon,) was, by adverse circumstances, reduced in life ; and hearing that there was an opening of Providence in Wellingborough for her future support, she was induced to ride over and make the necessary inquiries, prior to her commencing business. Just as she came opposite to Mr. Dermott's house, her horse fell, and one of her arms was fractured. She was immediately taken into the surgery, and Mr. Dermott, with his characteristic benevolence, on her informing him that she was a surgeon's daughter, and a stranger in the town, without friends, begged her not to be distressed ; that his house should be her home, till she was sufficiently recovered to be removed. While engaged in reducing the fracture, his patient took an opportunity of talking to him on the importance of religion, and the necessity of a constant preparation for another world. Her efforts to do good to those who had been kind to her did not end here. The late Mrs. Dermott was confined by illness ; and as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, this pious female visited her sick chamber ; but how was she surprised, on entering the room, to find, that, to amuse his wife, who was only just convalescent, Mr.

Dermott was playing at cards on the bed of the invalid ! “ O,” said this young woman, “ I had hoped that, instead of destroying your precious time thus, you would have been desirous to devote the remainder of your life to the service of that God who hath graciously spared you !” They both laughed at her, for being so scrupulous as to think that there was any harm in a game at cards : but as soon as she had left the room, they acknowledged that she was right, and they were wrong. “ However,” said they, “ others do as we do ;” and naming some individuals of different religious denominations, they thought there was no difference between those persons and themselves. How necessary is it, that professing Christians should keep themselves unspotted from the world ; or otherwise they may prove a stumbling-block to those who wish to set out for the kingdom of heaven !

Mr. and Mrs. Dermott were now conscious, like the hopeful youth in the Gospel, that something was yet lacking to make them happy ; and this they believed the young woman just mentioned possessed : they therefore determined that Mrs. Dermott should accept of a kind invitation which had been repeatedly given by the two Methodist families at Irchester, and hear what this new doctrine was. Accordingly, on the first Sunday after her recovery, she went ; but Mr. Dermott, not being humbled by a sense of his sinfulness, thought it derogatory to his character to be seen there. As she rode home, Mr. Dermott met her, and inquired what she thought of the Methodists. She said, “ Their doctrines appear so similar to the doctrines of the Church of England, that I think you would like them ; and I wish you to hear for yourself ;” which Mr. Dermott consented to do. The Rev. Wm. Jenkins was the preacher on that subsequent occasion ; and he gives the following account :—“ Mrs. Dermott came alone, in time for the preaching in the forenoon ; and afterward

dined at Mr. Berridge's, where I was invited to meet her. It did not appear, by any thing I could discover in conversation, that the word had made the least impression on her mind, or that she either understood the nature of the gospel or the need of a Saviour: on the contrary, her mind was gay and trifling, in the highest degree; so much so, that when a blessing was asked previous to our taking tea, she could not help laughing at the novelty of saying grace over a tea-table. Mr. Dermott at length joined us, and they both went to the chapel." Under the sermon which was then preached, and which was the first Methodist sermon Mr. Dermott ever heard, they both said in their hearts, "This people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God." After the service, Mr. Jenkins gave notice, that if any persons there wished to join the society, he would give them notes of admission. Mr. and Mrs. Dermott immediately went up to him, and asked for notes. The friends present, not knowing what had passed in their minds, at first thought it best to make an apology, and request them to defer connecting themselves with the society, till the nature and regulations of the Methodistic plan should be explained to them; but being fearful lest they should take offence, and not come again to hear the word, they did not interfere; and Mr. and Mrs. Dermott returned home resolved to belong to the Methodist body. Mr. Jenkins says, "On my return to Irchester, a month after this, I found a note from Mr. Dermott, requesting me to ride over to Wellingborough, and dine with him on that day. I immediately complied; and was received by them both with a most cordial welcome, as a messenger of the Lord Jesus. Their immediate and earnest inquiry was, 'What must we do to be saved? How shall we walk so as to please God?' And, with the true simplicity of all those who are enlightened and humbled by the grace of God, they received the instructions and advice given them



with cordiality and gratitude ; and declared their resolution, by divine assistance, that whatever others might either do or say, they would serve the Lord. The worship of God was commenced in their family, which they never omitted, whoever might happen to be present." Mr. Jenkins, having been informed by the friends at Irchester, that Mr. Dermott had previously imbibed Socinian notions, and was always forward in company to defend his sentiments, says, "I purposely framed my conversation to bear particularly on the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus ; and the necessity of that divinity to give efficacy to his atonement ; and the necessity of this atonement to our salvation. He perceived my drift, and suspecting the cause, immediately said, 'O, sir, you need not fear on that account ; all these notions are gone. I see clearly now, that Jesus Christ must be God, or he cannot save me.' The change in Mr. Dermott was visible to every one ; and not being able to account for such an obvious difference, most of his former friends forsook his society. There was now no obstacle to the introduction of Methodism into Wellingborough. The meetings were held in the house of the young person before mentioned, and Mr. Dermott thought it an honour to receive the preachers into his house. Had he formed his pious resolutions in his own strength, like Demas, he would, for worldly gain, have forsaken this little flock ; for the first persons who joined them were nine of the vilest characters in the town ; whose hearts were changed by the power of divine grace."

Mrs. Dermott now spent all her leisure time in visiting the sick and the poor ; and in order to relieve their necessities, and to purchase benches for the place of meeting, she sold some costly articles of dress, and jewels, which she determined never more to wear ; perceiving such ornaments to be contrary to the apostolic injunction, 1. Pet. iii. 3. Indeed, so great was her regard for the cause

of God, that the year after the formation of the society, a chapel was built; toward the expense of which she begged the greatest part of the money; travelling some scores of miles for that purpose. The chapel was opened by Mr. Jenkins.

It cannot be supposed that a change so great as that which Mr. Dermott had experienced would pass without observation; and the general opinion was, that he was deranged. Such is the wisdom of this world! This report, with his custom of praying with his patients, affected his practice; and he lost many respectable families. But, after a short time, he not only had as much business as formerly, but abundantly more; insomuch that, had he continued, it is probable he might have acquired a very large annual income.

Mr. Jenkins observes, "No sooner was it known that Mr. and Mrs. Dermott had turned Methodists, than astonishment, and a sort of alarm, spread through the whole town and neighbourhood; and falsehood and slander began to circulate in all directions. Among others who were greatly offended were the curate and solicitor in the town, who had been Mr. Dermott's companions in hunting, and in parties of pleasure. They thought it a pity to part with such a friend without an effort to reclaim him; and therefore agreed to go and reason with him; and were not a little confident in the strength of their cause, and in their hope of success. But, happily for Mr. Dermott and the cause of truth, he had been previously armed with 'the armour of righteousness' on the right hand and on the left, by reading, with much prayer, the Holy Scriptures, and Mr. Fletcher's Appeal, and other works that I had recommended to him, in which there were many references to the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies of the Church of England, and quotations from them; so that when the curate warned him against heresy, he

quoted the writings of the Church as well as the Scriptures, to prove the doctrines of Methodism to be consistent with both. When charged with enthusiasm, because he believed with his new friends in the influence of the Holy Spirit, as necessary to enlighten, to strengthen, to regenerate, and to sanctify the soul, and make it a suitable temple for God to dwell in ; he replied again in the words of revelation, and of the Church ; and plainly showed, that he was much more conversant with her doctrines than the curate himself. The next appeal was to his pride. ‘ Besides,’ said the curate, ‘ for you, Mr. Dermott, who have had an education fit for a clergyman, to listen to such men as the Methodist preachers, who know nothing, it is intolerable !’ ‘ In this,’ he replied, ‘ you are again mistaken. I used to think as you do, that I knew a great deal, and these men nothing ; but I now find that I am a mere child, and know nothing of religion or the Scriptures in comparison with them.’ In all this reasoning the solicitor did his best to assist the divine : but they were both foiled ; and the solicitor acknowledged, that Mr. Dermott was better acquainted with the Scriptures than the curate. However, they rallied once more, and made an attack, on the ground of worldly prudence ; in which honesty and honour were concerned. ‘ You ought to consider,’ said they, ‘ the expense you are at ; here you entertain the preachers when they come, and often several of their friends ; how is it possible that you can pay your debts if you go on in this way ?’ He thanked them for their kind consideration ; but assured them that they were utterly wrong. ‘ I confess,’ said he, ‘ before I knew this people, I was living to the full extent of my income, if not beyond it ; but since I knew the Methodists I have been saving money. To be candid,’ he added, ‘ we used to drink more wine at one of our entertainments, than all the Methodists that come to my house drink in a quarter of a year.’

This terminated the conversation. They regretted that he was so determined, bade him farewell, and retired.

"About the same time," continues Mr. Jenkins, "Satan sent forth a flood of calumny, slander, and lies of the vilest sort; but the Lord preserved his servants, and they were more than conquerors through Him who had loved them. Their piety, zeal, and usefulness increased daily. Mr. Dermott frequently conversed with his patients about their spiritual state, and prayed with them, when no other religious person had access to them. Having also the medical care of the parish poor that year, he introduced preaching and prayer-meetings into the workhouse; and was rendered exceedingly useful to many. He was likewise instrumental, in conjunction with the preachers, of opening many new places; so that we ultimately preached in nearly all the towns and villages of that neighbourhood. His method was, to inquire, in his professional visits to the different villages where preaching had not been previously introduced, whether any one was willing to lend his house for such a purpose. If he found no person willing, he, with the concurrence of the preachers, published for preaching in the open air; and carried the intelligence into the villages adjacent where his practice called him."

It is remarkable, that both Mr. and Mrs. Dermott were gently drawn by the cords of divine love; so that neither of them felt that high degree of terror and distress which some persons experience. As soon as they were convinced of the necessity of pardoning mercy, they immediately sought that blessing in earnest prayer and faith; and soon found this pearl of great price. It is not, indeed, known at what particular time either of them received a sense of the divine favour; yet the reality of their Christian experience was evidenced by a holy life.

Soon after Mr. Dermott had found peace with God, he

began to render himself useful to others, by publicly reading Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and enlarging upon them from the feelings of his heart ; and was soon placed on the plan as a local preacher, in which capacity he was remarkably active and useful. His medical practice so increased, that he seldom entered the pulpit, without being obliged to withdraw before the time of conclusion ; and he at length found, that he must either resign his business, or the delightful work of calling sinners to repentance ; but so decidedly convinced was he of his call to the ministry, which had already been graciously owned of God in the conversion of souls, and so great was his concern for the everlasting welfare of mankind, that worldly advantage had no influence upon his mind, when placed in competition with his beloved employ : and hence, notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of his acquaintance, who wished him to practise as a physician, he determined to forsake all, and go out into the highways and hedges to invite perishing sinners to the gospel feast.

When Mr. Dermott had announced this resolution, it was proposed that he should go into France ; and a church was appointed for him, in which he was to preach in the French language ; but a remarkable circumstance occurred to prevent it. A gentleman came to take Mr. Dermott's business, and remained at Wellingborough some time for that purpose. He was a man of honourable feeling, though he made no profession of religion ; and he was so much influenced by a persuasion that Mr. Dermott was going to ruin himself and his family, that he left the place, without assigning any other reason for declining the business. Had it not been for the delay thus occasioned, it is probable that Mr. Dermott and his family would have arrived in France at the awful period of the massacre, when such hatred was shown to all religion.

Though Mr. Dermott's name was inserted in the Min-

utes of conference in the year 1792, it was not until the year 1793 that he could fully enter into the Lord's vineyard. He was then appointed to travel in the Banbury circuit, with the Rev. George Deverell. As a minister, he proved himself to be a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. In doing good, both to the souls and bodies of men, he was "in labours more abundant;" and his pious exertions were so owned of God, in all the circuits where he travelled, that there was generally a considerable increase of divine life in every one of them, and a considerable addition of members to the society.

His next appointment was to the Dudley circuit, in some parts of which religion was far from being in a flourishing state. At Wolverhampton the congregations were very small. In order to improve them, Mrs. Dermott had recourse to an expedient which soon filled the chapel, even to overflowing. On a piece of paper, the size of the panes of glass in the front window of their dwelling-house, she wrote, in large characters, the hours of preaching; one side for the sabbath-day, and the other for week-day services; which paper was regularly turned at the beginning and end of every week. The house being in a very public situation, the list of services was read by many persons in a day, and multitudes came to hear the word of life.

In the succeeding circuit, Newark-upon-Trent, and also at Horncastle, where Mr. Dermott travelled in the years 1797 and part of 1798, he exerted himself in the formation of prayer-meetings in private houses, in the towns and hamlets, which were productive of much good; especially in situations where Methodism was scarcely known. He was also successful in the institution of benevolent societies; often observing, "When sinners will not come to the wells of salvation, we must carry the water of life to

their houses ; and never will their hearts be so open to receive the truth as in the time of affliction and distress." Many were the instances in which stout-hearted sinners were by these means brought to a knowledge of themselves. Mrs. Dermott, especially, went through much opposition in these exercises ; not regarding her own ease when she could obtain access to sick-beds, particularly when the sufferers were in an unconverted state. She carefully watched every opportunity of overcoming evil with good. One instance, among many which occurred about this time, may be specified. A young woman was dangerously ill, and visited by Mrs. Dermott. The mother was so enraged that a Methodist should come to see her daughter, that she took Mrs. Dermott by the shoulders, and pushed her out of the house. The daughter died ; and shortly after, the mother also was taken ill, and in great want of the necessaries of life. Mrs. Dermott was informed of this, just as she was going to partake of a roasted fowl ; which she immediately divided ; sending half of it by the hands of a neighbour to the poor woman ; who, as soon as she saw it, in astonishment inquired who it was that had sent it to her. On being informed that it came from the Methodist preacher's wife, bursting into tears, she exclaimed, " Do you think she will visit me ?" Mrs. Dermott was soon at the bedside of this sick woman ; and there is reason to believe she became truly converted to God, in which state she soon afterward died.

At the next conference Mr. Dermott was appointed to Redruth, in Cornwall ; for which appointment many will bless God to all eternity. He went to this circuit full of zeal in the good cause ; and confidently believing that it would be a year of great spiritual prosperity. Prayer-meetings were established, and supplication was made for the outpouring of the Spirit. His brethren in the ministry co-operated with him, actuated by a kindred feeling.

Prayer was graciously answered, and during that year two thousand three hundred and forty-seven members were added to the societies; many of whom are still ornaments to their profession, and many others of them are now with him before the throne of God.

A circumstance which happened in the neighbourhood of Redruth, in the year 1799, should not be passed over in silence. It had long been a custom for two or three thousand people to assemble every Whit-Monday, on Gwennap Green, to witness a variety of athletic sports. A numerous train of evils usually followed this exhibition. The preachers in this and the neighbouring circuits agreed to unite their efforts in directing the attention of the multitude to better enjoyments. A platform was erected on the spot; and upon this eminence preachers successively addressed the people, prayed, and sung hymns. They commenced these exercises at two o'clock, and continued till twilight. This arrangement effectually prevented the sports which had been anticipated; and many persons who came to laugh, remained to pray. Some of the people crowded into the public-houses; where they were followed by pious persons, and, when prayer was offered to God, soon forsook either the place or their amusements. Many sinners were awakened to a serious concern for their salvation on that day, who set out for the kingdom of heaven in good earnest, and held on their way.

At the ensuing conference Mr. Dermott was appointed to the Launceston circuit, where he had abundance of seals to his ministry. This year there was a great scarcity of corn; the price of every article of provision was high, and the poor suffered greatly. Mrs. Dermott, with her usual benevolence, was indefatigable in her exertions to give relief to the distressed, by procuring contributions for the purpose of obtaining a supply of bread and flour.



She once carried a loaf of bread four miles, to a family of whom she had heard, as being reduced almost to the last extremity ; and which was received with indescribable emotions by the sufferers. A blacksmith of profane habits, whom Mrs. Dermott had formerly felt it her duty to admonish, and who then returned her kindness with curses and execrations, was at length reduced, with his family, to the want of bread. Mrs. Dermott sent him an order from her hand for a quantity of flour. He could not believe that the order was for him, on account of his former conduct ; and on being assured that it was, his heart was melted into tenderness ; he acknowledged how undeserving he was of such attention, became reformed in his conduct, and a constant attendant on the means of grace.

At the next conference the Redruth society, who had felt a painful disappointment at the removal of Mr. Dermott from them at the end of one year, petitioned conference for his return ; and, to the great grief of the Launceston friends, he was removed from them to Redruth again. In this circuit, where he had such abundant success in the ministry, he was deprived by death of his valuable wife. This very excellent woman visited a person in the typhus fever, caught the infection, and became a victim to that malignant disease ; ending a life of great usefulness Oct. 16th, 1800. Her death was deeply and generally lamented ; and when her funeral sermon was preached, no building could hold the thousands who attended. Mr. Jacob Stanley, therefore, who was the preacher on the occasion, fixed upon the market-place as the most advantageous situation ; and the late Mr. John Poole preached in the chapel at the same time.

After leaving Cornwall, Mr. Dermott laboured in the Taunton, Downend, Shepton-Mallett, Worcester, Bradford, Weymouth, and Exeter circuits ; in which he was rendered exceedingly useful, especially in the latter city,

where there was such an outpouring of the Spirit, that the chapel doors were not closed for a whole week; and in order to prepare it for the Sunday's services, on the Saturday evening Mr. Dermott requested the penitents to come into his house. Many accepted the invitation, who refused to be comforted till they felt the burden of their guilt removed; and several went home rejoicing in the pardoning love of God. This was the employment in which his soul delighted; and he spared not himself, so that he might bring sinners to Christ.

In the year 1816 Mr. Dermott was stationed at Kingswood, and afterward at Hammersmith, High-Wycomb, and Burslem; and in 1824 he was appointed a second time to Newark-upon-Trent. This year was not the least happy of all the years of his itinerancy. Here he found some, with their faces still Zionward, who had been seals to his early labours in the ministry; and he delighted to see many societies flourishing in prosperity which he had known in the day of small and feeble things. But, though he still hoped to be a useful labourer in the Lord's vineyard, he was soon called to resign his public charge, and quietly to suffer his Master's will. On this occasion his feelings are thus expressed in a letter to a friend, dated June 14th, 1825:—"The Lord has been graciously pleased to put it in my power once more to approach you in the usual silent way, which indeed is now almost the only way in which I am able to converse with any one, except with Him to whom utterance is not necessary. At our district-meeting, at Nottingham, the 17th ult., the complaint which I had felt at Spilsby and elsewhere developed itself. A paralytic seizure deprived me of the use of my right hand, and of distinct articulation, while in the house of God, where I had gone on public service, by express appointment. I felt myself unusually affected while going there, and secured Mr. Miller as my substitute on the way; but was

not apprised of the extent of the affliction till the service was over. Since then I have gradually acquired the use of my hand, although I am soon weary of the pen ; my voice still continues so defective, that I have never attempted any thing beyond family prayer ; and perhaps every thing else is closed with me for ever, even supposing that I should be so favoured as to have no repetition of the malady, which is but seldom the case. Our good Lord has been pleased to teach me the value of speech in a way I never before understood. I hope and pray, that if I ever lay aside the writing-table, it may be to open my mouth in the spirit of holy Zacharias. At present, therefore, lying under this disability, we are turning our thoughts toward a little sphere of social usefulness, and shall retire into our family recess at Bristol, for the present, and possibly in future to London ;\* as the Lord has been pleased to leave us a choice of joys and family delights, and we can find praise and thanksgiving in full blow, with, we hope, perpetual spring in either soil. But why do we think so much on these social moments, in our imperfect state ? Is not heaven an eternal interview ? And all will be there whom we shall then wish to be there, and He especially who is all in all. But, if that be the garden of sweets, yet here grow the daisies and the violets, and we will gather them together as we go. Notwithstanding my right hand strangely forgets her cunning, I must add, that in Christ our loss is gain. May we gain complete ascendancy over all things terrestrial ; yea, may our gain ascend to triumph, and to rapture unceasing."

From this time Mr. Dermott was obliged, almost totally, to lay aside the pen ; his faculties became gradually impaired, excepting his memory, which never failed him to the last. The nature of the complaint was depressive,

\* Mr. Dermott has left a daughter settled in Bristol, and a son rising to eminence in the medical profession in London.

yet he was quite resigned to the will of his heavenly Father; and through the whole of his affliction was happily preserved from murmuring. His mind was kept in perfect peace; he had no doubt of his acceptance with God; no fear of death, or of its consequences; his hope of eternal salvation was sure and steadfast, founded on the atonement of Christ and the promises of the gospel. He was continually engaged, during his waking moments, in prayer and praise; his heart and his treasure were in heaven, and he had no disposition to enter into conversation about earthly things. Of prayer he was never weary; but urged every one who visited him to that holy exercise. For a short time, during his affliction, he was painfully exercised, because he had not more joy; but he was soon relieved by an application to his mind of these words,—“Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” This filled him with holy exultation; and from this period he had no more conflict on that account. His peace flowed with the constancy of a river, and kept his heart and mind through Christ Jesus; and though, from the nature of the disease, he had frequent involuntary mental wanderings, yet even at those times he seemed to be engaged in prayer; and however absent he might be respecting temporal things, when spoken to on the subject of religion, he always answered with propriety. For some weeks before his death, he spoke very little, and only in short sentences, expressive of his unshaken confidence; such as, “It is better to depart and be with Christ; my foot is on the rock; I am going to heaven.”

On the last day of his life, when unable to speak, he evidenced by signs to his afflicted partner, that he felt the power of appropriate texts of Scripture, and verses of hymns, which at intervals she repeated to him; and several times, raising his dying hand, he waved it in token

of victory, till without a struggle, on the 6th of February, 1827, he peacefully resigned his soul to God who gave it.

His remains, attended by all the preachers, were interred in a vault, under Portland chapel; and funeral sermons were preached on the occasion at Bristol, Kingswood, and Bradford.

In the death of Mr. Dermott the mission cause has lost a zealous advocate. It not only had his best wishes and fervent prayers, but he exerted himself to the utmost to procure subscribers by having missionary boxes placed in every shop, factory, and dwelling-house which he visited. The Missionary Notices, likewise, he was careful to have distributed regularly wherever they were likely to do good. There was therefore a considerable increase to the subscriptions in several of the circuits where he travelled. His kind attention to the bodies as well as the souls of men will not soon be forgotten by the hundreds who had the benefit of his advice. His house and heart were always open for the afflicted, and often has the room in which he received them been too small for those who have sought his advice; and who, while receiving medical assistance, also received religious exhortation. With those especially whose complaints were likely to prove fatal, he would deal very faithfully; entreating them to make their calling and election sure, during the short period they had to live; and he never failed to pray with them whenever opportunity served. Indeed, his house was always a place "where prayer was wont to be made." In some circuits, on market-days, many of the friends would regularly retire thither to spend a little while in that holy exercise. When urged by any persons who had received benefit from his professional advice, to take some remuneration, he invariably refused it on his own account; but would always remind them of the Missionary Society, and of the fund for the support of aged ministers and widows; and

tell them that he should expect a contribution toward these institutions.

His punctuality, in attending to his appointments, was remarkable. Frequently, when urged to spare himself, has he resisted the importunity of his friends, notwithstanding the distance of the place which he had to visit, and the inclemency of the weather. Not only did he attend to what might be considered his duty ; but he was never weary in well-doing. He would not allow himself, in some places, to have a vacant night ; but would preach an extraordinary sermon in some new place, where he would soon get a cheap building erected to serve as a Sunday school, and a preaching room. Many of these little chapels are now, in different parts of the kingdom, filled with attentive hearers. Those preachers who have had the pleasure of joining with him in this good work, can testify, not only of his zeal for the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom, but also of his affection for his brethren. The following extract of a letter on these subjects was addressed to his bereaved widow, by the Rev. John Hobson, of Glasgow : —“ I think it one of the happiest circumstances of my life that I had the honour of travelling with Mr. Dermott, as his son in the gospel, during the last year of his ministry ; when I had not only an opportunity of receiving his judicious counsels, but of witnessing his burning zeal for the universal spread of the Redeemer's glory. Notwithstanding his bodily debility, his active and pious mind seemed always studiously labouring to carry into effect new and enlarged plans of usefulness. I greatly admired his steady and active exertions in behalf of the missions. I never knew his equal in this. It affords me great pleasure that I had the happiness, in any small degree, of contributing to the ease and comfort of his declining days, and to recollect some of the many gracious seasons we enjoyed together.”

This zealous servant of the Lord, besides faithfully discharging his ordinary ministerial work, constantly reproofed sin wherever he saw it, especially sabbath-breaking ; and, in going to preach on the Lord's day, he would not let any one pass him, whom he thought to be improperly employed, without reproof and admonition. When travelling to any distance, if he met with company on the road, he introduced religious conversation ; and many persons have thanked God in public, and him in private, for the reproof he had given them.

"I was once," says the Rev. Thomas Rogers, "travelling with Mr. Dermott, from Weymouth to Bath, in company with a gentleman who proved to be a very interesting companion. He was a literary man, and had been a great traveller. In the course of conversation, this gentleman took the name of God in vain. Mr. Dermott looked kindly at him, gently raised his hat from his head, and said, 'Sir, I am accustomed never to use that sacred name but with reverence. You will greatly oblige me if you will do the same.' 'I thank you, sir,' replied the gentleman ; 'I have merited the reproof, and will endeavour to profit by it.' He did so ; for though they kept up a spirited conversation for some hours, he carefully abstained from that sinful habit. When he left the coach, he took an affectionate leave of Mr. Dermott, saying, 'Sir, I most sincerely thank you for your kind reproof: I hope never to be guilty of the same fault again while I live.'"

Thus lived and died George Darby Dermott ; who, during a long affliction, reaped the benefit of that grace he had preached to others ; till, like a shock of corn, fully ripe, his happy soul was gathered to the garner of God, to join with his fathers, brethren, and children in the gospel, in a heavenly chorus of praise and thanksgiving to God and the Lamb.

